

The New Architecture: Iakov Chernikhov and the Russian Avant-Garde

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“The new art of Suprematism, which has produced new forms and form relationships by giving external expression to pictorial feeling, will *become a new architecture*: it will transfer these forms from the surface of canvas to space.”<sup>1</sup>

--Kazimir Malevich, 1927

The career of an architect is defined by much more than the number of buildings attributed to him. This concept applies most concretely to Russian architect Iakov Chernikhov (1889-1951). One of the most prolific writers of architectural design theory in his time, Chernikhov stressed the necessity of complexity that could not be found in earlier styles of Neoclassicism and Art Nouveau. As an artist and an architect he valued rhythm over repetition and asymmetry over symmetry.<sup>2</sup> His views on design, both professional and personal, as presented in his numerous texts, illustrate a gradual metamorphosis of the twentieth century architect in the midst of revolutionary theories and experiments. Collectively, the texts stand as Chernikhov's own program of creative and technical thought produced from his “laboratory of architectural forms.”<sup>3</sup> The introduction of non-objectivity, coupled with the political revolution in Russia, provided both a social and stylistic stratification that makes most salient the architect's position between often opposing ideals of creativity and utility. As a counterpart of both the Russian avant-garde and the academic institutions of Petrograd in the 1920s, Chernikhov is a prime example of the architect's position between two different realms: the architectural and the artistic (i.e. painting and sculpture). This dual nature became both advantage and disadvantage for Chernikhov and his colleagues when it came to reinventing architectural style for a new Socialist state. In his social context of early Soviet Russia one finds the primary issues of

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<sup>1</sup> Kazimir Malevich, *The Non-Objective World*, trans. Howard Dearstyne (Chicago: Paul Theobald and Company, 1959), 100.

<sup>2</sup> Catherine Cooke, ed., “Russian Constructivism & Iakov Chernikhov,” *Architectural Design*, 59, no. 7/8 (London: Academy Group, Ltd., 1989), 8.

<sup>3</sup> Catherine Cooke, *Chernikhov: Fantasy and Construction* (London: Architectural Design AD Editions, 1984), 5.

functionality, efficiency in both aesthetic relationship to the viewer and usefulness to the viewer, and above all, the growth of a *new* architecture.

The epigraph above comes from the book *The Non-Objective World*, written by artist Kazimir Malevich (1878-1935), and published in Berlin in 1927. This sentiment of an artistic transition, however, had been at work in Malevich's painting since he first painted a black square in 1913. As an echo of this act, the assertion that art will become something new establishes the artistic climate of Russia in the early twentieth century. This period exemplifies in many ways the culmination of the avant-garde's development that began in the previous century. Artists during this era became socially and technologically aware, bringing concepts of industrialization to new beginnings in their work. In light of the October Revolution of 1917, these avant-garde ideas are also revolutionary in their own right. During this time, the ideals of the new abstract art that were already formed before World War I found political parallels in the growth of Socialism. Russian society as a whole appeared to be discarding the old ways of the tsarist regime in order to advance to a new frontier. Malevich's words are an assertion of the success of the revolution, one that would be fueled by the artistic and architectural work of groups such as *UNOVIS* (Affirmers of the New Art)<sup>4</sup> in Vitebsk.<sup>5</sup>

In this school, artists such as Nikolai Suetin (1897-1954), El Lissitzky (1890-1941), and Ilya Chashnik (1902-1929), continued to produce work based on Malevich's Suprematist theory. The term "Suprematism" was, in fact, coined by Malevich himself to encompass both his artistic style and his artistic philosophy. Suprematist works are known for their geometric forms

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<sup>4</sup> Translated from the Russian *Utverditeli novogo iskusstvo*. Christina Lodder, *Russian Constructivism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 318.

<sup>5</sup> Malevich established *UNOVIS* in 1920, drawing students from the Vitebsk Art School where he briefly worked with artist Marc Chagall. The group focused on applying Suprematist ideas of composition to broader areas of design, including architectural models, furniture, and porcelain ware. This functional three-dimensional art brought Suprematist theory not only out of the realm of painting, but also out of the gallery—into the immediate world of the public. *Ibid.*, 251.

arranged on white backgrounds—Malevich’s way of demonstrating freely floating forms in undefined space. In this way, Suprematists explored ideas of physicality in a yet undefined world instead of observing the natural world as it is in the present.<sup>6</sup> According to Malevich and future Suprematists, art possessed a “revelatory power” that could be cultivated through pure non-objectivity. That is to say, Suprematist art was about new ways of interpreting reality without conventional means such as collage and representational imagery. In the case of Suetin in particular, the fundamentals of the black square were his primary focus. In keeping with the principles of design as seen through the eyes of Suprematist theory, Suetin applied the same premise of non-objective space to surface tonality.<sup>7</sup> Suetin incorporated into Suprematism’s “new art” a concern with sensation and feeling. As evidenced by his paintings and drawings (Figs. 3-4), tonality adds an expressive dimension to the Suprematist square by exploring the subatomic gradations of shade. Though Suetin was perhaps most loyal to the original ideas of Malevich, other students at *UNOVIS* worked to make real the transition of art to architecture that Malevich predicted. The series of projects—given the name *PROUN*<sup>8</sup> produced by Lissitzky from 1919 to 1920—were, according to the artist’s writings, “intermediary states” in the process of bringing non-objective thought into real space.<sup>9</sup> Though two-dimensional, the *PROUN* series exhibits an architectural understanding of order.

According to Lissitzky, architectural order is about holding forms together by purely abstract means. Gravity and other aspects of the material world essentially play no role in this

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<sup>6</sup> Myroslava M. Mudrak, “Suprematism,” in *The Encyclopedia of Aesthetics* vol. 4, ed. Michael Kelly (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 336.

<sup>7</sup> With his work on tonality, Suetin constructed a classification of painting based not on form, but on the sensations produced by the quality of the surface. See Patricia A. Railing, trans., *The Suprematist Straight Line* (exh. cat. London: Annely Juda Fine Art, 1977), 36.

<sup>8</sup> According to Lodder, *PROUN* could possibly be an acronym meaning “Project for the affirmation of the New,” [Proekt utverzhdeniya novogo] or “For the School of the New Art,” [Pro uchilishche novogo iskusstva]. Lodder, 249.

<sup>9</sup> The phrase “intermediary state” suggests that the *PROUN* project is a step in the evolution Malevich prescribed that serves as a bridge between pictorial art and architecture. Railing, 22.

intermediary architecture. Rather than approaching the design of his *PROUNS* from the perspective of an engineer—concerned with matters of physical tension and compression—Lissitzky composes structure by intersecting Suprematist squares and circles in a way that creates harmony of both color and shape, as evidenced by *Proun 1919/20* (Fig. 5). The composition appears fluidly structural, as if Lissitzky has briefly interrupted the flight of these independent forms. The assumption of form in “free flight” was explored by another *UNOVIS* artist, Chashnik. In his architectural paintings, Chashnik creates “kinetic tension”<sup>10</sup> by rooting the composition in a single form, often circular, one that, in fact, does demonstrate a magnetic pull on all other elements (Fig. 9). In his horizontally-oriented watercolors, Chashnik brings to Suprematist form a subatomic nature seen in Suetin’s work, as if the paint traced the paths of electrons (Fig. 8). Thus the subject of his painting, therefore, is not necessarily the geometric forms themselves, but about the unseen forces they want to portray. As paintings, these are purely non-objective; there is no pictorial representation of the natural world and no mimetic treatment of it. At the same time, the composition suggests that these unseen forces lend the geometric forms a concrete quality, making one conscious of space. The work of both Chashnik and Lissitzky demonstrates two manners in which art and architecture become fused, a move designed to make Suprematism relevant to the material world. There are two aspects of architecture in Suprematist terms: it is both a design problem and an essential component of society. With this in mind, art and architecture have qualities that would appear to create a more efficient art form, i.e., an art form that is both private when viewed as the creation of an individual and public when viewed as art for practical function. Such an art form could, by its

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 32.

architectural nature, broadcast avant-garde ideas to the world outside of the exhibition, putting Malevich's revolutionary assertion in the public eye.<sup>11</sup>

In their experimentation with non-objective form, the artists of *UNOVIS* illustrate the Suprematist will to "clear the areas of the wide world of the whole chaos that prevails in it."<sup>12</sup> The essence of Suprematism is apparent in "0.10: The Last Futurist Exhibition," the 1915 Leningrad exhibition at which Malevich introduced Suprematism as the new art, a new beginning launched by the painting entitled *Black Square* (Figs. 1-2). The work shrugged off previous conceptions of art to assert a non-objective, universal art form. Overall, the exhibition (which goes hand-in-hand with Malevich's writings) had a prophetic character. The implicit side of Malevich's "prophecy" centers on the Suprematist loyalty to sensation as the primary tool in the artistic process.<sup>13</sup> In contrast, Malevich's prediction in his essay on Suprematism that the new abstract art will create a new architecture is far more explicit in its prophetic nature. In his "Notes on Architecture" (1924), Malevich writes: "I understand architecture as an activity outside all utilitarianism, a non-objective architecture, consequently possessing its own ideology . . . an activity free from all economical, practical and religious ideologies."<sup>14</sup>

The rejection of classical typology in favor of the purely non-objective is one of the leitmotifs of Suprematism. To get to that threshold, Malevich extends his theories from the governing elements of painting—the forms in free flight that the artist harnesses in the act of composition—to the materiality of architecture. Despite its applications to design in the real

<sup>11</sup> Larissa A. Zhadova, *Malevich: Suprematism and Revolution in Russian Art 1910-1930* (London: Thomas and Hudson, 1982), 96.

<sup>12</sup> From the leaflet "Ot UNOVISA—utverditelei novogo iskusstva," [From UNOVIS—The Champions of the New Art], *UNOVIS Almanac No. 1* (Vitebsk, 1920) as quoted in Railing, 85.

<sup>13</sup> Unforeseen in 1915 is Suprematism's foreshadowing of later movements in modern art such as Abstract Expressionism in the forties and fifties and Minimalism in the sixties. See Charlotte Cummings Douglas, *Swans of Other Worlds: Kazimir Malevich and the Origins of Suprematism: 1908-1915* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1980) 1-2.

<sup>14</sup> Malevich, Kazimir, "Notes on Architecture," *The Artist, Infinity, Suprematism: Unpublished Writings 1913-1933*, trans. Xenia Hoffman, ed. Troels Anderson (Copenhagen: Borgen, 1978), 102.

world, Suprematism involves the “discovery of the still unrealized.”<sup>15</sup> Achieving the unrealizable requires the artist to detach himself from seen objects—from the earth itself. The intent of Suprematism is to portray space without using the world of objects as a stepping-stone; to convey form straight from the artist’s consciousness. As its name would suggest, the method of Suprematism is presented as superior to earlier movements like Impressionism and Cubism, for these still rely on mimetic methods to access the sensation beyond the object. Malevich would seek to express a direct relation between the “sensed” idea of space and the forms that appear on the canvas.<sup>16</sup> For example, Malevich uses his prescribed geometric forms to express the *feeling* of motion or magnetic attraction without recognizable objects from the real world (Figs. 10-11). Thus Suprematism also has a transcendental aspect; the new art would not rely on the “partial reason” humanity possessed at present, but it would search for the totality to which spiritual evolution leads.<sup>17</sup> This evolutionary view of time is what drove artists such as Malevich and his students in Vitebsk to paint what *might* be, as opposed to what *is*.

The avant-garde search for the unrealizable in art headed by *UNOVIS* influenced an entire generation, including Chernikhov, who also established himself as an “artist-architect” with his architectural fantasies. Chernikhov’s first desire was to become an artist, an ambition that perhaps began with childhood lessons taken from his school’s drawing teacher.<sup>18</sup> By enrolling at the Odessa Art School in 1907, Chernikhov expanded his artistic goals by becoming a student of

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<sup>15</sup> Kazimir Malevich, “Letters to Matishiu,” published by E.F. Kovtuna in [*Ezhegodnik rukopisnogo odtela*] (Leningrad: Pushkin’s House, 1976), 192, in Douglas, 53.

<sup>16</sup> Malevich asserts this new art on the basis of the “supremacy of pure feeling in creative art.” See Malevich, *The Non-Objective World*, 67.

<sup>17</sup> Douglas, 52. The term “evolution” in this paper should in no way be taken as Darwinian evolution in the biological sense. From this point forth, “evolution” is meant to evoke an artistic and philosophic metamorphosis—in contrast to the widely-used concept of revolution—in the avant-garde progress in early twentieth century Russia.

<sup>18</sup> Chernikhov’s teacher, M. I. Sapozhnikov, was a follower of symbolism, then a popular movement among Russian painters. Symbolic content would remain a factor in Chernikhov’s graphic work in matters of composition and effects upon the viewer. From Anatolii Strigalev, “Iakov Chernikhov: Genius of Architectural Fantasies,” in *Iakov Chernikhov: The Logic of Fantasy* (New York: Columbia Books of Architecture, 1990), 20.

painting and architecture, as well as a teacher of mechanical drawing. His early paintings show not only his will to include both arts in his career, but they also foreshadow later examples of his visionary architecture (Fig 12). Even while he was still in school, Chernikhov was already experiencing the conflict between the utilitarianism of drafting and the pure theory of abstract painting, straddling two arts that had always been treated as separate and discrete media. Chernikhov's continuing studies at the Academy in Petrograd were marked by two major achievements that would have lasting effects on his career: one was earning his diploma in teaching methods for graphic arts in 1917; the other was his transfer from the Academy's Higher Art School to the department of architecture, known as *VKhUTEMAS*.<sup>19</sup>

Even after the rise of avant-garde art, architectural studies in Petrograd remained rooted in traditional academic methodology and, as a student of this approach, Chernikhov created many copies of historical styles.<sup>20</sup> After World War I and the October Revolution, the school and its students began producing work that drifted away from neoclassical ornament.<sup>21</sup> Classical ornament was being simplified, shifting the focus to a "crude" sort of constructivist formalism.<sup>22</sup> One example of this is the model of a church in an architect's catalogue; the structure appears

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<sup>19</sup> By 1917, the seeds of two publications were sown: *The Art of Graphic Representation* (1927) and *A Course of Geometrical Drawing* (1928), Strigalev, 22.

<sup>20</sup> Students of the Russian Academy became familiar with many different typologies, from the widely-known Greco-Roman style to the traditional medieval Russian style. A "unique" building, such as a village church, was essentially a "new" combination of predetermined themes, always regulated by traditional canons of architecture. Even in modern design, ideas of rhythm and color in architectural ornament were valuable tools that can be improved by expressing the formal qualities underneath, as opposed to covering them. See Cooke, *Chernikhov: Fantasy and Construction*, 10-11.

<sup>21</sup> This movement toward modern styles, though distinct from stylistic movements in the West, has its own Russian roots. The Academy and the nationalists stood in favor of historical styles, wishing to preserve the neoclassical ideals imported from Western Europe. Yet there were the beginnings of stylistic debate in Moscow, for example, when in 1834 Mikhail Bykovsky presented his paper "On the unsustainability [neosnovatel'nost'] of the view that Greek or Graeco-Roman architecture can be universal and that beauty in architecture is founded upon the five well known Order systems." In many ways, Classical architecture ruled Russian style from the time of Peter the Great until the abdication of Nicholas II, when functionalist and constructivist schools of thought truly began to flourish. See Catherine Cooke, *Russian Avant-Garde: Theories of Art, Architecture, and the City* (London: Academy Editions, 1995), 6-13.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.



“nude,” stripped of ornament and fenestration, with its formal parts—domes, towers, and apse—color-coded in order to examine its combinatory nature.<sup>23</sup> Other examples from the academy juxtapose detailed analyses of Russian churches with very cursory, Platonic original conceptions (Figs. 13-15). Steeped in this stylistic shift, Chernikhov graduated from in 1925, with nearly a decade of teaching experience in graphic arts.<sup>24</sup> The technical skills Chernikhov possessed as a draftsman—the ability to create clean contours and detailed renderings—act as his bridge between art and architecture. In many ways the transitions Chernikhov experienced parallel those of Malevich and his students; to create architecture that is free from history and objectivity, and thus nearer to an artistic sensibility, both chose a path of design and geometry.

As exemplified by his various texts, Chernikhov’s primary ambition during school and after graduation was pedagogical; he wished for his students to understand the symbolist dimension of mechanical form. His students at various technical schools would learn to draw using machine parts as models, yet they would also learn that a drawing could record more than exterior appearance. That lines and planes could present “ideas, dreams, and fantasies” and could conjure up “that which never before existed and is newly born in the consciousness of the human creator,” is a concept that permeates Chernikhov’s teachings and his own architectural expression.<sup>25</sup> Even teaching graphic arts included more than aptitude with a pen; his position as an educator allowed Chernikhov to highlight what was his own individual manifesto apart from *UNOVIS* and the various “isms” that flourished within the avant-garde as a whole.

Aside from Chernikhov’s pedagogical autonomy, the synthesis of what is technical and what is artistic in his work is directly connected to the avant-garde, and especially its most radical expression in Suprematism. In *The Construction of Architectural and Machine Forms*

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<sup>23</sup> See Cooke, *Chernikhov: Fantasy and Construction*, 10.

<sup>24</sup> Cooke, 8.

<sup>25</sup> Strigalev, 24.

(1931) Chernikhov sets examples of “suprematistic” exercises in the combining of parts (Fig 16). For example, in a variation of standard Suprematist compositions, a black circle and square are crossed with multiple horizontal and vertical bars. Where the elements cross, black becomes white yielding a checkerboard pattern that highlights the process in which the elements were combined.<sup>26</sup> Despite the use of terms such as “constructional” and “suprematistic,” Chernikhov declared himself neither a Constructivist nor a Suprematist. Rather, he took from Malevich the simple concept of non-objectivity in architecture as “the achievement of a certain kind of equilibrium.”<sup>27</sup> Formal laws, as opposed to natural laws, govern these compositions. That is to say that forms are composed in a manner that shows the viewer a balanced relationship, as opposed to being copied from what the artist sees in front of him. Suprematism’s non-objectivity enters architecture in such a way that what one expects of a “building”—four walls and a roof—is subordinate to the experience that the artist-architect wishes to convey. Thus Malevich and Chernikhov share the Russian avant-garde desire to find a new language of form.

It is a fact that members of the avant-garde such as Malevich and Vladimir Tatlin (1885-1953), had revolutionized the art world of 1920s Russia with their non-objective, post-Futurist art. The general artistic aim was to do just that: to facilitate revolution by pushing art to a higher level. However, this notion of revolution begs to be examined further when informed by the academic background of an architect such as Chernikhov. By definition, the art of the avant-garde is “unorthodox,” a departure from the norm,<sup>28</sup> and in the case of early twentieth century

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<sup>26</sup> Iakov Chernikhov, *The Construction of Architectural and Machine Forms* [*Konstruktsiia arkhitekturnykh i mashinnykh Form*] (Leningrad: Leningrad Society of Architects Edition [Izдание Leningradskogo obshchestva arkhitektorov], 1931), 40-43.

<sup>27</sup> Cooke, ed., “Russian Constructivism & Iakov Chernikhov,” 14-15.

<sup>28</sup> “Avant-garde,” in the aesthetic sense, takes on a broader meaning than the latest artistic movement. Avant-gardists in general sought to do something *else* with their work, be it an attack on the established, institutional art or a more socially or politically involved agenda to revolutionize life. These two concepts—the aesthetic and the political—are integral in the definition of the avant-garde. Though the work may involve arts such as poetry and

Russia, it was not only a rejection of the past orthodoxy, but also a statement of the will to create something relevant to a newly formed socialist society.<sup>29</sup> Naturally, the term “revolutionary” can be applied to the art of the avant-garde, yet this does not mean that the artists of the avant-garde were creating something without any ties whatsoever to the past. Twentieth century artists still worked within the traditional academic sphere as students and teachers. Though education is connoted by its very name, the academy did not value innovation and forward thinking as much as it valued drawing upon a set of conventions in order to create art. This particular educational system was very political, often associated with the aristocracy, and it cultivated an art concerned with taste and status. It was, in this sense, autonomous when it came to style, requiring the public’s taste to conform to its will. One lingering element of the academy is a very private and didactic position on how art and architecture should be understood. It was an art for a specific audience, not the collective masses that became the focus of Soviet art.

### *Architecture Parlante*

“We shall be able to talk ‘Doric’ when man, in nobility of aim and complete sacrifice of all that is accidental in Art, has reached the higher levels of the mind: austerity.”<sup>30</sup>

--Le Corbusier, 1923

The purpose of this brief overview of *architecture parlante* is to highlight the inherent similarities of artists in revolutionary times. Placing the artistic aims of using forms to

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painting, the true product of an avant-gardist is a “protocol of experience.” Peter Bürger, “Avant-garde,” in *The Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, vol. 1, ed. Michael Kelly (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 188.

<sup>29</sup> The term “orthodoxy” is not to be confused with religious Orthodoxy in early twentieth century Russia. Malevich and Tatlin are only two artists who adapted the practice of making icons—using planimetric images to convey theological meaning—in order to underscore their Suprematist and Constructivist work as a new *artistic* orthodoxy relevant to the new Socialist society. The concept of confining the icon to a strict rectangular area is meant to convey Suprematist space in such paintings as the *Black Square*, just as Orthodox icons conveyed a separate, sacred space not to be confused with a mimetic representation of the natural world. Mudrak, 336.

<sup>30</sup> Le Corbusier, *Essential Le Corbusier: L’Esprit Nouveau Articles* (Oxford: Architectural Press, 1998), 204.

communicate and create ideal cities for the worker<sup>31</sup> in broader historical perspective suggests a different way of viewing the Russian avant-garde. Above all, a statement made by Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (1735-1806), of the architect's role defines what the two periods share: "Everything is within his realm—politics, morality, legislation, worship, government."<sup>32</sup> For modern architectural theorists, architecture is not merely about spaces and ornament, but also about fitting it into the very fabric of society. With *architecture parlante* as a model, the examination of Russia's avant-garde shows that twentieth century architectural rhetoric, at its base level, is not revolutionary at all. Echoes within ideologies and ambitions suggest a stylistic evolution exterior to well-defined cultural and temporal boundaries. Russian architecture is yet another episode of conflict between tradition and innovation, pushing architecture into the realm of universal experience.

Revolutionaries never completely break with their roots, they adapt and reapply in ways that suit their own ventures, as is the case with Swiss architect Le Corbusier (1887-1965). In *Vers Une Nouvelle Architecture* (1923), Le Corbusier stresses the grandeur of the Parthenon as a product of its singularity in the composition, not as a source of imitation. In the case of the Russian Academy, the institution was gradually adapted to the new art as evidenced by Chernikhov's experiences. It is important to recognize that this process occurs beyond the boundaries of the twentieth century. For instance, the public environment of eighteenth century

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<sup>31</sup> For example, Ledoux's ideal city, an archetype for twentieth century architects as well, became a reality with the commission of the salt works at Chaux (Fig. 20). After viewing industrial complexes that sprang up "haphazardly," Ledoux's approach was to create not just a factory but an entire worker's city as well. Begun as a royal project for an industrial complex, Ledoux transformed the salt works into the beginnings of a city, a concrete expression of his own theoretical work concerning utopian architecture. Such projects often met negative criticism from the patrons whom they were intended to enlighten: "Columns in a factory!" members of the court allegedly scoffed. The "ideal" city of Chaux appeared to be a golden opportunity, but the transition to the three dimensional realm and its societal and financial requirements proved too much. As with many other commissions, what we now call genius was rejected due to its expense, a lack of resources, and the unwillingness of the court to offer patronage. Jean-Claude Lemagny, *Visionary Architects: Boullée, Ledoux, Lequeu* (exh. cat. Houston: University of St. Thomas, 1968), 108-110.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 109.

France posed a significant challenge to architects in the Royal Academy. With the ascension of Louis XV to the throne, the period between 1748 and 1755 saw a solidified public cry for monumental architecture. During the last days of the Rococo style—dedicated mostly to opulent, aristocratic commissions—writings in pamphlets and journals called for more public works such as the church of St. Geneviève in Paris.<sup>33</sup> Movements such as this challenged the academic system to broaden its audience, an adjustment that created tension between catering to elite tastes and pleasing a growing “proletariat.” As members of the French Academy, the careers of Ledoux, Etienne-Louis Boullée (1728-99), and Jean-Jacques Lequeu (1757-1825), occupied positions on the border between mainstream tastes and renegade innovations. Each one of them was a visionary. Because of the prototypical character of their work within a traditionalist, academic system, the architecture that they imagined had a futuristic quality as of yet unseen.<sup>34</sup> All three of these visionaries had aspirations beyond the correct classical Order<sup>35</sup> and the precise proportions that would please the eye. The direct formal expression of function or ideology in most of the buildings designed by this visionary trio is in effect an attempt to let the architecture speak for itself, to forge a direct connection with the viewer.

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<sup>33</sup> Examples of great pre-Revolution architecture such as Versailles and the Louvre were built upon ideas of taste that operated only within the estate of the nobility and the aristocracy, hence its “private” nature in reference to the collective public. Furthermore, these edifices were textbook-like examples of architecture in the real world for students of the Academy. The concepts of design and inspiration were relegated to the pedagogic sphere. With the emergence of an architecturally-aware public, the need for buildings to fit properly into their contexts became a primary concern. Jacques François Blondel, a member of the Academy, took the task of examining this concept in his courses on architecture appreciation. The text *Discourses sur la nécessité de l’étude de l’architecture* (Paris, 1754) was intended to develop a more discriminating—that is, the ability to discern higher concepts of the design—public when it comes to architecture. Richard Wittman, “Architecture Parlante – an Anti-Rhetoric?” *Daidalos* no. 64 (1997 June), 15-18.

<sup>34</sup> Followers of this trio of visionaries at the Academy such as Louis-Jean Desprez (1743-1804) showed great enthusiasm for the grandeur of *architecture parlante*, spreading its imaginative take on classicism beyond the Academy and even beyond France. At first glance, it would appear that the work of Boullée, Ledoux, and Lequeu had used the very system of the Academy to break away from its rules of taste, giving students new masters to imitate. Yet within the Academy itself, the three innovators as well as other teachers found this adherence shocking. Lemagny, 213.

<sup>35</sup> Following the example set in the Renaissance by architectural theorists such as Alberti, conventions in classical architecture relied on the use of the Greek Orders—Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian—as proportional templates especially for public architecture.

First used in the mid-nineteenth century by Léon Vaudoyer to, in fact, criticize the work of Ledoux, the concept of “speaking architecture” (*architecture parlante*), has become synonymous with buildings whose inner nature—in simplistic terms, the function or purpose—is directly conveyed to the viewer without the use of typologies and allegory. More specifically, the term relates to student work that produced “‘readable’ structures requiring the spectator to decipher them.”<sup>36</sup> Though these three French architects did not use this phrase specifically, their work aimed at creating architecture that speaks, i.e., it expresses an idea that can be received by the viewer. In contrast to merely combining elements of contemporary classical tastes, *architecture parlante* is in its truest form experimental and eclectic. Because of this theoretical and apparently unattained quality, *architecture parlante* is seen from the modern perspective as avant-garde.<sup>37</sup> Yet architects continued to use the conventions of the academy, classical ideals of balance and pure form, to form this new architecture; therefore, the architectural revolution occurred within the academy itself as experimental change within the minds of students.

Even before the Revolution of 1789 and the prevalence of artists in the service of political propaganda, the French academy’s so-called *architecture parlante* instilled properties of a language into architectural practice. Attempts to create architectural language are exemplified by Boullée’s *Cenotaph to Newton* (1784, Figs. 22-23), or Lequeu’s *Project for a Cow Stable* (ca. 1800, Fig. 21). The former creates an immense space with its own architecturally-produced sun and stars in order to translate not only the visionary scientist, but also the sublime nature of the

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<sup>36</sup> Wittman, 12.

<sup>37</sup> The term *architecture parlante* can be problematic in modern theory, with the publication of such works as *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form* by Robert Venturi, et al. (1977), that examine architecture as sign in the commercial sense. While this should not be read as a revival of *architecture parlante*, it is relevant to note the changing attitudes of architects toward their environments and the public. *Architecture parlante*, for the purpose of this paper, involves the attempt to capture modern commercial architecture’s accessibility to the viewer while maintaining a formalist approach to design. Formalist architects like Le Corbusier and Chernikhov use their art to *change* the present environment in a utopian manner, one that pushes the limits of a building’s visual accessibility the same way avant-garde painting challenges the very existence of art through non-objectivity.

cosmos, which Newton helped us to understand. The latter pokes fun at *architecture parlante* by taking the ordinary and making it exceedingly grandiose, simply to advertise that it is a place for cattle to inhabit.

*Architecture parlante* is thus seen as an attempt to regain a cultural element that has been lost to the moderns, an architecture that speaks for itself as its own formal language, and is understood by its public. In mid-eighteenth century Paris especially, there was a desire to have architecture in dialogue with its context—city—and also with its public.<sup>38</sup> The avant-garde of this era searched for this elusive harmony “completely outside of tradition, in a sort of virgin space free of the baggage of history.”<sup>39</sup> While “revolutionizing” the scope of the architect beyond historical typology, this process of design still clung to the typological ideals that governed classical architecture.<sup>40</sup> This very vantage point brought about works of architecture that were never constructed because the immensity of the projects was ahead of contemporary means and technology. Even during the eighteenth century, sensitivity toward the public as a discerning audience and ideas of a future utopia had become paramount while actual construction often fell to the wayside.<sup>41</sup> This ideal state of architecture is based upon a perfect society, one unified in taste and philosophy that architects would strive to recreate in modern times.<sup>42</sup> The ability of the object to provoke communication is predicated on the society’s

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<sup>38</sup> The cultivated, historical taste of the academy that turned out pediment after pediment lost all ability to connect with its public, inspiring amusing works such as La Fontaine de Saint-Yenne’s *L’Ombre du Grand Colbert* in which the Louvre engages in conversation with the city. Wittman, 15.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>40</sup> The term “utopian” in this sense references the idea that architecture is rooted in the great works of past civilizations that can be copied and varied. Not only was this a source of form and ornament, but also the architecture itself evoked a sense of the idyllic past in the imagination of the viewer.

<sup>41</sup> According to the writer Jean-Louis Viel de Saint-Maux, whose work allegedly influenced some of Ledoux’s own theories, ancient society was perfectly unified, and “everything was linked by indissoluble connections: religion, culture, . . . the arts and sciences, the gifts of Nature, all these causes . . . arranged themselves in all their correspondences, upon their Monuments.” Jean-Louis Viel de Saint-Maux, *Lettres sur l’architecture des Anciens et celle des modernes dans les quelles se trouve développé le genie symbolique qui preside aux Monumens de l’Antiquité* (Paris, 1787), VII, 7 as quoted in Wittman, 20.

<sup>42</sup> Wittman, 23.

singular understanding, such as a society's use of one language—*architecture parlante* is defined by experimental attempts at presenting architecture as a visual language.

*A Russian Sort of Architecture Parlante*

“Always and everywhere replace the word by the graphic image.”<sup>43</sup>  
 --Iakov Chernikhov, 1927

Whether it is too far-fetched and too anachronistic to liken the positions of Chernikhov to those of Boullée, Ledoux, and Lequeu, an analysis of Chernikhov shows a career that spans the entire artistic spectrum, from graphic arts to architectural fantasy and abstract painting.

*Architecture parlante* enters into Chernikhov's context via his texts, which in a way are guides to learning the language of structure and ornament that could be composed into infinite combinations by his students.<sup>44</sup> The experimental nature of these textual illustrations express an idea behind the composition, as opposed to an expression of a building's function seen in eighteenth century *architecture parlante*. Because of the two-dimensional vocabulary of his work, Chernikhov's style gradually melded with a painterly, avant-garde appreciation for architecture produced solely on paper. The artistic elements in Chernikhov's drawings are often compared to the engravings of Giambattista Piranesi (1720-1778), for their romantic and expressive elements. They attempt to formulate experience for the viewer by combining two sensibilities—the practical and the poetic. The practical aspect of any architectural drawing, of course, is accuracy of scale and informative detail. The additional use of shading and color allows the viewer to appreciate the drawing as more than an axonometric or a plan; for instance, the immensity of one of his “Palaces of Communism” is expressed not only in the scale of the drawing but in the very strokes of pen and pencil.

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<sup>43</sup> Strigalev, 24. Quoted from Chernikhov's *The Art of Graphic Representation* (Leningrad, 1927).

<sup>44</sup> Cooke, *Chernikhov: Fantasy and Construction*, 5.



When applied to a career such as Chernikhov's, the term "universal" references many different levels of theory; his work closes the gap between two seemingly opposing elements in the history of architecture and finds correspondence in the parallel field of painting. The persistence of two polar opposites in art, specifically in painting, can be directly applied to architecture.<sup>45</sup> The implications of viewing avant-garde architecture in Russia as part of a stylistic evolution—as opposed to a great upheaval likened to the October Revolution—beg the question: is the Russian avant-garde part of a larger progression toward architectural utopia? Though it does not bear the same stylistic title, the character of Constructivist architecture created by twentieth century visionaries suggests that artists in Russia set up an artistic atmosphere that can be translated as another episode of *architecture parlante*. Despite the strength of modernism in Europe in the early twentieth century, the social climate in Russia provided an isolated environment in which the age-old debate between two opposing styles could continue. However, as isolated from Western influence as Russia became, it should not be assumed that the Russian avant-garde comprised a unified, homogeneous front.

The stylistic debate in Russia began within an environment of experimentation supported by schools such as *VKhUTEMAS* and *UNOVIS*. There the language of art and architecture took on a meaning quite different from the *architecture parlante* of previous centuries. Russian "utopia"

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<sup>45</sup> In his introduction to the exhibition *Visionary Architects: Boullée, Ledoux, and Lequeu* (1968), Jean-Claude Lemagny forms an analogy between the dichotomy of styles of painting established by Swiss art historian Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945), to those seen modern architecture. Wölfflin wrote of a formalistic approach to art history in *Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Later Art*. His analysis is based on pairs of opposite qualities, such as linear style versus painterly style, a composition based on plane versus one based on recession, and multiplicity versus unity. This approach suggests an overall dichotomy in the history of art that moves in a cyclical motion between a "classical" mode and a "baroque" mode, which is not to be limited to the Renaissance in contrast to the Baroque period, but instead measures defining characteristics seen in these periods. See *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Donald Preziosi (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998) 109-126. Following Wölfflin's dichotomous categorization, Lemagny's analogy allows us to think about the Art Nouveau style as looking back to the opulence of the baroque, just as Functionalism might lead back to neoclassical taste, in direct opposition to seventeenth century baroque. The rather anachronistic nature of this comparison opens the door to seeing the stylistic change of modern architecture in a more universal sense, despite the modern intent to shrug off history.

was not the idyllic Greco-Roman variety found in earlier episodes. Function, specifically that of a monument, would be secondary to a more artistic philosophy behind the avant-garde architecture of the growing Soviet Union. In order to explore this dimension further, one must return again to Malevich. To reach back to an original, perfect state of art, Suprematism dealt not with visual signs of history but with visual essence. In Malevich's terms, the art of Raphael and Rubens was that the original essence enclosed in a pictorial shell is hidden away from a society unable to sense it.<sup>46</sup> With the *Black Square* as a primary and essential unit, Suprematist art would rebuild the link between society and sensation; it would be through geometry that art would break out of the shell. By reaching to a more formal solution to the problem of communicative architecture, Malevich approached a state in art exemplified by the blurring of medium and genre. Late in his career, Malevich began working on plaster "sculptures" that were exhibited in June of 1926 at GINKhUK, the Institute of Artistic Culture in Leningrad.<sup>47</sup> These *architectons* [*arkhitektoniki*] are Malevich's interpretation of Suprematism in three dimensions.

At first glance, Malevich's architectons appear as gigantic pieces of some space-age mineral, as if the very atomic structure has determined the size and orientation of each facet. The placement of larger pieces surrounded by smaller, proportionate pieces suggests a growth process, as if the architecton is being fleshed out from a central origin (Fig. 27). This organic quality presents a provocative juxtaposition with the crisp right angles of the cubic forms. The whole composition has a distinctly horizontal or vertical orientation with few crossing axes; thus the idea of order is based on the harmonizing of parts rather than on artificial symmetry. Even

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<sup>46</sup> Kazimir Malevich, "Suprematism," *The Artist, Infinity, Suprematism: Unpublished Writings 1913-1933*, trans. Xenia Hoffman, ed. Troels Anderson (Copenhagen: Borgen, 1978), IV: 144. The expression "pictorial shell" refers to the depiction of the natural world as one *sees* it, which Malevich considers a distraction from the world as one might *sense* it. The shell implies that even in the most classical art, there is *sensation* hidden underneath—this sensation is what Malevich worked to expose through Suprematism.

<sup>47</sup> The exhibition actually occurred after Malevich's dismissal as director of the Institute of Artistic Culture [Gosudarstvennyi institut khudozhestvennoi kul'tury]. John Milner, *Kazimir Malevich and the Art of Geometry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 190.

*Alpha Architecton* (1920, Fig. 25)—with its miniscule, bar-like elements set perpendicular to the overall orientation—achieves a state of balance due to the distribution of masses rather than linear proportion. Because of their pristine, monumental nature, Bella Toporkova suggests that the architectons exhibit impassivity in relation to the viewer.<sup>48</sup> There is no apparent mimetic prompt to inform any reaction—no cornices or colonnades suggesting a building. Yet this impassivity is interrupted by certain Suprematist tools, such as the black circle painted on the surface of *Gota Architecton* (1923, Figs. 26-27). Situated near the base, the circle acts as a visual anchor for the entire composition, a literal representative of the Suprematist square (Fig. 28). One can only postulate Malevich's reasoning for such an element, yet it is apparent that there are two distinct vocabularies at work in the *Gota Architecton*. The two-dimensional vocabulary of the black circle is a direct transference of Suprematist painting to this new medium—the three-dimensional white form. The *Gota Architecton* presents a new perception of the architectons as extensions of the canvas itself into space. Thus the architectons are essentially evolved from the Suprematist canvas; they are at once painting and architectonic sculpture based on this interplay between white and black.

Exhibited along with Suprematist ceramic works (Fig. 24), the architectons are part of the *UNOVIS* program of bringing Suprematism into the arena of the plastic arts. The vertical orientation of the *Gota Architecton* reveals kinetic tension at work in the composition; its observation of unseen forces recalls the two-dimensional work of Chashnik. Like the two-dimensional forms of his paintings discussed above, the white elements of the architecton are held by the magnetic pull of the black square while reaching upward along the vertical axis. Just as Suprematist painting put on display the unseen forces that create order, the architecton

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<sup>48</sup> Yevgenia Petrova, ed. and trans. Kenneth MacInnes, *Kazimir Malevich in the Russian Museum* (exh. cat. St. Petersburg: State Russian Museum, 2000), 35.

emphatically presents the spatial relationships between parts as part of some higher natural order, not simply the choice of the artist. According to Toporkova, Malevich had not intended for the architectons to be static; the composition brings together independent pieces, placed according to both concepts of balance and movement. In direct contrast to the geometric, monumental quality is a quality of organic malleability created by the multiple white blocks. Even the positions in which Malevich placed the individual blocks are impermanent and moveable; each architecton can be dismantled piece-by-piece and put together with slight variations. That the pure white—indeed, nearly blank—forms cause the viewer to rely on logic and not on nature for interpretation, excludes the important aesthetic philosophies at work in Europe at the time.<sup>49</sup>

Though they were not meant to be true architectural models, the appearances of the architectons display striking similarities to contemporary architectural drawings by Chernikhov. Such “architectural fantasies,” executed in drawings present the information of an architectural diagram in an artistic way.<sup>50</sup> Even Chernikhov’s more detailed renderings exhibit the simple combination of like parts to create a complex, yet unified whole. One work, a “spatial amalgamation of skyscraper elements” is exemplary in its technicality while maintaining an artistic unity.<sup>51</sup> The use of warm or cool colors, paired with accurate contours, produces drawings that are not only technical, but also visually engaging, allowing the viewer to see the forms as more than buildings. Furthermore, the kinetic nature of the organization of independent

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<sup>49</sup> The reigning philosophy of institutional art and architecture based design firmly on the use of existing typologies. That art and architecture were derived from the observation of nature was a determinant concept for maintaining classicism in the architecture of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The rise of technology and engineering changed the architectural and artistic landscape of Europe through the machine aesthetic. Function and available structural technologies (as well as projected technologies of the future) played an increasingly important role in the architectural work of Russian Constructivists, the Bauhaus in Germany, and the atelier of Le Corbusier.

<sup>50</sup> Chernikhov’s two-dimensional work in series such as “Principles of Architecture” and his text entitled *Architectural Fantasies* (1933), range from purely geometric compositions similar to the illustrations in *The Construction of Architectural and Machine Forms* to axonometric diagrams of industrial or urban sites. Chernikhov considered these “Suprematist” for their spatial qualities and achievement of equilibrium. Cooke, *Chernikhov: Fantasy and Construction*, 12.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

forms—in both Malevich’s models and Chernikhov’s drawings—supersedes ideas of symmetry; the balance comes from viewing the whole as a product of some natural constructional process. Essentially Chernikhov breaks down architectural form into its base components of horizontals and verticals, creating the impression of “majesty and upward aspiration” (Fig. 30).<sup>52</sup> It would appear that Chernikhov, as a designer with many different skills, was part of the new generation of artists-architects that would bring Suprematist theory into real space.

Le Corbusier once commented on the architectural nature of Suprematist composition, stating that Malevich “creates a harmony that is a pure product of his own mind . . . the correlations of forms created by him arouse a profound response and lead us towards comprehension of the harmony of the world. The architect’s oeuvre is the source of many of our emotional movements and helps us to cognize beauty.” As suggested by Le Corbusier’s reaction to the architectons, spatial harmony is the common denominator between the art and architecture of the twenties in Europe. After the ravages of World War I, the principle aim of artistic culture was not only to rebuild, but also to create a new utopia out of the ashes. One of the ways architects such as Le Corbusier approached this virtual *tabula rasa* was the machine aesthetic.<sup>53</sup> In his comments, Le Corbusier makes apparent the conjoining sensibilities of painting and architecture. A complement to the formal merging of painting and architecture seen in the architectons, the words of one of the most famous architects of the day attest to an ideological merging brought about by the will to break away from an irrelevant past and begin anew.

Architects such as Le Corbusier who were active working simultaneously in painting and sculpture exemplify a sort of pre-architecton moment in the evolution of avant-garde

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>53</sup> The modern house, for Le Corbusier and German colleagues of the Bauhaus, was “a machine for living in,” not a model of beauty through taste but through efficiency and balance. Ornament in the traditional sense is sacrificed in buildings such as the Villa Savoye in Poissy, France, for structural honesty and pure forms, a new machine age beauty. Charles-Édouard Jeanneret Le Corbusier, *Tezisy [Thèses]* (Moscow, 1977), 9; quoted in Petrova, 35.

architecture. The concept that Malevich's work in Vitebsk—far from the atmosphere of the machine aesthetic in the West—could create an object with the same artistic effects as Le Corbusier strove to create points to the architectons as a paragon of avant-garde architecture. In this context, the architectons represent an even tighter bond of art and architecture, lending even more clarity to the conflation of art and architecture in modern times. In Malevich's work, the architecton is a physical manifestation of Suprematist form extracted from the canvas, a work of painting and architecture combined.

Aside from visual parallels, the nature of Chernikhov's work complies with the aspirations Malevich had for the new architecture. An architect such as Chernikhov inherently works with abstract forms, free from the pictorial shell Malevich saw in traditional painting.<sup>54</sup> Some of Chernikhov's architectural fantasies do depict realistic details such as trusses and cables, but they exist on a blank, two-dimensional surface like Suprematist paintings (Figs. 29, 31). The constructions appear as colorful rectangles and parallelograms joined in such a way that one layer provides a sufficient support for the next. Many of these fantasies exhibit the same ordered structure of Malevich's architectons not because both had buildings in mind, but because Suprematism and architecture share many of the same aims. Chernikhov's interests in Suprematism go beyond modes of presentation; he too saw geometry as a way to represent harmony and equilibrium.<sup>55</sup> The same tendency to portray kinetic forces is evident within the most technically accurate drawings, though the forces are often understood as symbols.<sup>56</sup> The

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<sup>54</sup> Malevich, "Notes on Architecture," *The Artist, Infinity, Suprematism*, 102.

<sup>55</sup> Catherine Cooke, ed., "Russian Constructivism & Iakov Chernikhov," 14.

<sup>56</sup> When applied to Chernikhov's more technical architectural fantasies, "symbolism" should be understood in a thematic sense. An industrial complex, for example, can be rendered as a conglomeration of rectangular elements or with highly detailed articulation and fenestration—making what Chernikhov dubbed "fantasy" appear at first glance the plans for an actual building. In the latter, the most salient characteristic, which Chernikhov points out in his text, is a "union of complex curved volumes on the principle of interpenetration of bodies." Cooke, *Chernikhov: Fantasy and Construction*, 86.

artistic link between pure form and human emotion, which Le Corbusier inferred upon viewing the architectons, has now become a conscious element in Chernikhov's architectural fantasies.

Architecture as a source of emotion and beauty, as Malevich writes, is beyond any historical or ideological application. He even asserts the irrelevance of the inherent utilitarian necessities of constructing buildings.<sup>57</sup> Yet as we will see in the work of Chernikhov, history is not simply renounced, as it would be impossible for a practicing architect to ignore the practicality of using known types. The challenge that Chernikhov faced was to find a way of reconciling Suprematist theory with his own historically-inspired "fantasies." The same Suprematist "coding" that organized the mechanical graphics in *The Construction of Architectural and Machine Forms* (1931, Figs. 17-18),<sup>58</sup> applies to Chernikhov's fantasies, some of which appear as "real" buildings while others resemble colossal machine parts (Fig. 19).<sup>59</sup> Like Malevich, Chernikhov believed that formal qualities could be applied no matter what the medium—that painting, mechanical drawing, and architecture could all be "high art" in the sense that they bring the viewer closer to a sense of the beautiful or expressive.

### *The Cultural Revolution*

"I immersed myself in the most secret regions of invention and imagination, and I discovered some unknown treasures of images never seen."<sup>60</sup>

--Iakov Chernikhov

Though Chernikhov's work maintains the conflation of art and architecture seen in the architectons of Malevich, his later fantasies of the nineteen-thirties depart from the strictly

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<sup>57</sup> Malevich, "Notes on Architecture," *The Artist, Infinity, Suprematism*, 102.

<sup>58</sup> This mainly pedagogical text provides methodologies for drawing abstract geometrical forms to be used in both technical drafting, which Chernikhov taught at various schools, and architecture, including the forerunners of his architectural fantasies. See Chernikhov, 40-43.

<sup>59</sup> Cooke, *Chernikhov: Fantasy and Construction*, 65 (illustration).

<sup>60</sup> Jean-Baptiste Para, "Piranesi of the Land of the Soviets [Piranèse au pays des Soviets]," *Europe Revue Littéraire Mensuelle*, ed. Charles Dobzynski, 74, no. 803 (March 1996): 206. (Translation by author.)

geometric quality that forged such a strong link to Suprematism. The motivations behind Chernikhov's designs are rooted in the traditional education he received at Odessa and Petrograd: he brings to typical geometric form the technical expertise of a draftsman mixed with the eclectic interests of a "pre-Suprematism" artist. As a student of art, Chernikhov gained a sense of the expressive, and as a graphic artist, Chernikhov gained a respect for the logical. In his teaching methods he unites concepts that Malevich would have deemed distracting: for instance, music was enlisted as a tool for exploring spatial rhythm (Fig. 31); moreover, medieval architecture provides examples of color harmonies.<sup>61</sup> That Chernikhov's work involves the interplay of such various roles—that of teacher, graphic designer, architect, and artist—underscores that the meeting of art and architecture cannot be purely formal as Malevich predicted. Those aspects of utilitarianism, which Malevich deemed irrelevant to the aims of Suprematism, proved to the practicing artist-architect to be unavoidable.

Formal analysis of Chernikhov's architectural fantasies within the framework of the architectons presents him as the inheritor of Suprematist theories. Yet while in conversation with the work of Malevich, it becomes apparent that the avant-garde with which Chernikhov was engaged posed a threat to the tentative link between artist and architect. As an architect, Chernikhov had certain obligations to create the realizable—an object useful to society—yet an avant-garde artist such as Malevich strives to push beyond social and practical boundaries. After nearly two decades working toward complete non-objectivity, the "revolutionary phase" that lasted from 1917 to 1932-33,<sup>62</sup> the Russian avant-garde's artist-architects were faced with the inherent consequences of their work. The final years of this phase, known as the "Cultural

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<sup>61</sup> Chernikhov's apparent point involving color harmony revolves around the ability of color to underscore the structural concept of a building. Colors in certain combinations create rhythm and movement that can enhance the viewer's understanding of what an architect wishes to convey with concrete and steel. *Ibid.*, 32-33.

<sup>62</sup> Peter Lizon, *The Palace of Soviets: The Paradigm of Architecture in the U.S.S.R.* (Colorado Springs: Three Continents Press, 1995), 15.



Revolution,” produced a generation whose architectural work was steeped in social ideology as well as the formal abstraction of Malevich. Chernikhov and his contemporaries Ivan Leonidov (1902-1960), and Konstantin Melnikov (1890-1974), were part of this generation who expected to see the institutions of the past—entire cities, industries, and schools such as the academy in St. Petersburg—“wither” and be replaced by modern, socially relevant ones.<sup>63</sup> This philosophy brings a social dimension to the new architecture that Malevich did not appear to anticipate: the role of the architect at this time was not only to construct buildings, but also to adjust architectural style in order to fit its new social context.

During the so-called Cultural Revolution, Russian Constructivist architects benefited from stylistic links with the West. Facilitated by the participation of Western architects in Soviet competitions and Soviet exhibitions in Germany, artists and architects of this era could work side-by-side. In this multicultural environment, classical typology and modern non-objectivity appeared to coexist harmoniously. What is called into question by many scholars is whether the abstract forms being created in the late nineteen-twenties and early nineteen-thirties are simply results of the growing role of engineering, or if the forms are truly the expressions of artist-architects.<sup>64</sup> In the writings of these architects, both Russian and Western, it is the social situation and not the technology that determine design. Gropius considers that “a worker will find that a room well thought out by an artist; which responds to the innate sense of beauty we all

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<sup>63</sup> Frederick S. Starr, *Melnikov: Solo Architect in a Mass Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 148.

<sup>64</sup> Henry-Russell Hitchcock refers to the parallel nature of the transitions both art and architecture underwent in the early twentieth century—as artists rejected the process of imitation, architects also rejected the tradition of historicism. Just as abstract artists began to break away from the traditional image-maker mold, modern architects as well began to break away from an academic control of the process of building. Both these two art forms as well do not always operate on their own terms; science’s rise to power in a sense undermined the necessity of these rejected traditions. With photography providing realistic images and advances in engineering, creating better if not aesthetic structures, an artist or architect’s rejection of the old seems an afterthought. Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Painting Toward Architecture* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1948), 11-12.

possess, will relieve the monotony of the daily task.”<sup>65</sup> There was, after all, both a practical and an ideological need to rebuild in post-war Europe, and in Russia especially, there was a whole new society to be built. The consciousness of the potential impact of architecture is what apparently brought the formal theories off the canvas and into space during this revolutionary phase, yet communication with the public remained an obstacle.<sup>66</sup>

The new, socially-aware generation of Constructivists defines a sort of Russian brand of *architecture parlante* in the early twentieth century. Melnikov proves to be a link to the past through his own *architecture parlante* approach, characterized as “blowing up ordinary objects into whole buildings,” and using the form of a water cart for the Svoboda Factory Club in Moscow (Figs. 36-38).<sup>67</sup> Leonidov considered the purpose of an architect to be “life-building,” to construct forms that would be visually connected to society’s creative and idealist progression.<sup>68</sup> In the years after the revolution, he was not the only one to view the movement of Russian society towards a new political and economic system as an indicator of a broader societal evolution. Leonidov’s roots were as eclectic as Chernikhov’s, mixing the familiar and traditional with the abstract and theoretical.<sup>69</sup> With projects such as the Lenin Institute (Figs. 34-35), Leonidov imposed Constructivism onto daily life, creating not one building but a whole

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<sup>65</sup> Walter Gropius, “The Development of Modern Industrial Architecture” (1913) in *Form and Function: A Source Book for the History of Architecture and Design 1890-1939*, ed. Tim and Charlotte Benton (London: Crosby Lockwood Staples, 1975), 54.

<sup>66</sup> With the construction of the Café Aubette (1926-1928) in Strasbourg, Theo von Doesburg’s advancement into architecture as part of the De Stijl movement met disapproval. Though his intention was to allow “the new human type [to] feel at home in the world,” the public was unable to read his architectural work as the permeation of art into life. Richard Padovan, *Towards Universality: Le Corbusier, Mies, and De Stijl* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 6.

<sup>67</sup> Starr, 149-150.

<sup>68</sup> Andrei Gozak and Andrei Leonidov, *Ivan Leonidov: The Complete Works*, ed. Catherine Cooke (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1988), 16.

<sup>69</sup> Leonidov was involved with the Constructivist journal *Contemporary Architecture* until its demise in 1930, and was immersed in the same pedagogical sphere that Chernikhov saw as the primary mode of spreading their theories and their goals for architecture as a societal institution. The last issue of *Contemporary Architecture* was published in 1930 amid growing strain between the two architectural schools of thought. The Constructivists, deemed “Formalists” by the academics, began to fall out of favor because of the apparent lack of practicality in their visionary work. At this same time, *VKhUTEIN* closed, marking Leonidov’s “departure from education.” *Ibid.*, 8.

complex to serve multiple functions. The aim of artist-architects was not only to join the forms of painting and architecture but also to accomplish a blending of form and function, both practical and social.

The will to cross old boundaries was compromised by the social environment; Chernikhov and his contemporaries had to struggle against a stylistic polarization among Russian architects. By the 1930s, the Constructivist style of abstract architecture was considered contrary to the more nationalist, classical styles preferred by the growing Soviet state.<sup>70</sup> Melnikov's desire to unite these two tendencies was eclipsed by the expectation that architecture would cater to the people as a whole, without attention to the ideals of an individual. Like Melnikov, so Chernikhov also struggled to reconcile architecture's various tendencies in a time that wished to polarize them. Architecture, as an art form, was to be a blending of formal abstraction and practical engineering. Yet the public was not necessarily prepared to receive these Constructivist buildings with the same formal eye with which an exhibition of paintings might be received.

Chernikhov himself lamented the criticisms of his architectural fantasies, feeling "deprived of all possibilities not only to conduct profound academic work on architectural problems, but to do real practical work in building design and in teaching."<sup>71</sup> There is a misunderstanding here of the architect's "job" within a society, a moment in which the architect and the public do not see eye-to-eye. For Chernikhov, his career had many modes as educator, artist, architect, and theorist, yet the public wants a builder to produce monuments, factories, and homes, not to experiment with forms on paper. Architects have both the privilege and the disadvantage of creating forms outside the art gallery in the full view of the public, often an arena where the "new" is not well received.

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<sup>70</sup> Lizon, 19.

<sup>71</sup> Catherine Cooke, ed., "Russian Constructivism & Iakov Chernikhov," 10.

The polarization of Russian architectural style persisted, culminating in a period called Socialist Realism that lasted from 1932 to 1954. The Western link was virtually severed, cutting off Constructivism's stylistic allies at the Bauhaus and elsewhere in Europe. With the formation of the Union of Soviet Architects in 1932, the debate between the avant-garde and classicism had apparently been resolved.<sup>72</sup> Architects of this Union, such as Boris Iofan (1891-1976), and Georgii Golts (1893-1946), used classic Renaissance models such as Brunelleschi and Palladio in their public works, including banks, theatres and workers' clubs.<sup>73</sup> Classical architecture was no longer confined to the realm of the academy, when compared to that of the foreign, utopian Constructivists; it had become the official, government-sanctioned style (Fig. 40-41).<sup>74</sup> This new national style, as defined by the officials of the Palace of Soviets competition, required "the use of modern forms together with the finest traditions of classical architecture, supported by the latest advances in contemporary architectural and constructional technique."<sup>75</sup> Firmly within the realm of historicism, the work of these architects was driven by the same concept as the most "Formalist" structure Leonidov or Melnikov could create: to establish a new, official style that would signify the Soviet state in all its attributes.<sup>76</sup>

Also during this period, the Socialist Realist style demanded that the old be destroyed, exemplified in the demolition of Konstantin Ton's Church of Christ the Redeemer, and replaced by the new: the Palace of Soviets.<sup>77</sup> The competition for this new project, which was intended

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<sup>72</sup> William Craft Brumfield, *A History of Russian Architecture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 487.

<sup>73</sup> Alexei Tarkhanov and Sergei Kavtaradze, *Stalinist Architecture* (London: Laurence King, 1992), 10-11.

<sup>74</sup> Lizon, 20-21.

<sup>75</sup> I. Eigel, *Boris Iofan* (Moscow, 1978), 13; quoted in Tarkhanov, *Stalinist Architecture*, 29.

<sup>76</sup> The combination of technology and tradition in design is not necessarily "new" when one regards Joseph Paxton's Crystal Palace (London, 1851), or Henri LaBrouste's Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève (Paris, 1851). The Beaux-Arts style that dominated nineteenth century France and spread throughout Europe in fact embraced the concept of construction with iron and steel, though its aesthetic qualities remained firmly planted in classical stone architecture. Iron was wrought to resemble the orders, a concept contrary to the design principles of the Constructivists.

<sup>77</sup> Brumfield, 485.

to be the ultimate architectural symbol of Soviet success, occurred during this time of continuing stylistic confusion. The Union's wish to simultaneously reject the old architecture and combine its traditions with modern technology reveals a design problem beneath the Constructivist versus Rationalist debate. Any design project has two sets of criteria to meet: the quantifiable and the qualitative. Where the measurable parameters—matters of engineering, materials, and dimensions—cease to control the character of the design, the architect must use other methods of completing the design. One modern method is based on the use of intuition in an assumed “cultural vacuum.”<sup>78</sup> Constructivist architecture and *architecture parlante* alike depended upon this concept that forms could possess a communicative meaning that relied not on tradition, but on direct conversation with society. For example, Melnikov's entry to the competition uses the pyramid, a well-known cultural icon, to demonstrate the Soviet will to virtually turn society in the opposite direction—in the case of the pyramid, the upward aspirations of the monumental canopy (Fig. 39). Paradoxically, Socialist Realism achieved a higher level of communication with the public because of its conception of historical types with little alteration on the basis of symbolic meaning.

By 1937, the Union had either absorbed former Constructivists or, like Melnikov, they became stylistic expatriates. Perhaps because of his position outside the stylistic debate, Chernikhov continued to produce work exemplary of the avant-garde mixture of art and architecture. His response was not necessarily to conform to Socialist Realism, but to borrow from its tenets just as he borrowed from those of Malevich. Compared to other entries in the competition for the Palace of Soviets, Chernikhov's drawings are executed with Piranesi-esque

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<sup>78</sup> Alan Colquhoun, “Typology & Design Method,” In *Meaning in Architecture*, ed. Charles Jencks and George Baird, 267-77 (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1970), 273. Beneath the debate between historicism and formalism is the question of whether forms possess meanings independent of historical context. In the case of Russian architecture in the twentieth century, Colquhoun's assertion that intuition in the design process relies on types provided by past design solutions sides with the Rationalists.

energy of line and shadow (Figs. 42-43).<sup>79</sup> The expressive nature of Chernikhov's drawings are not meant to downplay the role of Socialist ideology; in fact, in *Autobiographical Notes*, a manuscript from the 1940s, he considers these fantastical projects "the only path for solving such a complex and responsible task as the creation in our country of buildings which have a genuine ideological foundation."<sup>80</sup> Chernikhov continues his theoretical work while adapting to the architect's role as a supporter of the Party; within his texts, for example, the less fantastical drawings are accompanied by slogans such as "Proletarians of the world unite!" and "Down with the petty bourgeoisie." (Fig. 52).<sup>81</sup>

Through his work for the Socialist Party, Chernikhov apparently complies with the notions of ideology-driven architecture, yet he did not take his most ideological work to the point of construction. Staying in the realm of two-dimensional drawings, Chernikhov maintains the concept of a joining of the two arts even as the avant-garde falls out of favor. As evidenced by the didactic and imaginative nature of his drawings, there was much more at stake for Chernikhov than practical construction.<sup>82</sup> Chernikhov separates himself from other architects by taking in stride the changes brought about in his work by external forces like Suprematism, Constructivism, and Socialist Realism, using them to further his own individual inquiries into the purposes of architecture.

Though Chernikhov himself did not win the commission for the Palace of Soviets, and though he did not build any of his fantasies, he was successful as an individual in a society that demanded collectivity. This is not to say that he necessarily thrived once strict stylistic rules

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<sup>79</sup> Tarkhanov, 12. Iofan's winning entry is exemplary draftsmanship: crisp and clean, complete with triumphant aircraft flying overhead. In comparison to Chernikhov's work, it in fact appears more modern, more in tune with the machine aesthetic at this time.

<sup>80</sup> Cooke, ed., "Russian Constructivism," 86.

<sup>81</sup> Chernikhov, 104.

<sup>82</sup> Chernikhov's fantasies and palaces are not the only work during the thirties that was much too grand in scale and scope to be built; in fact, Iofan's winning design for the Palace of Communism was never completed due to faulty foundations.

were put in place, for both he and contemporaries such as Melnikov and Leonidov suffered from lack of commissions and public disapproval. The “collectivity” for which Chernikhov created his Palaces and Pantheons is, like that which Malevich painted, one that was yet unrealized. Socialist Realism was not the correct environment for these architectural fantasies, but it did give Chernikhov the opportunity to experiment and expand his formal studies into the realm of drawing, just as Malevich made his claim of Suprematism during the revolutionary period. In this way his career runs counter to the society for which he worked, a society for whom construction symbolized power and success. As an art form, architecture is highly public, requiring a certain amount of bending to the will of the client, as Chernikhov has shown quite subtly. Yet while the esteem of practicing architects grew, the role of an artist appears to be a haven, a more personalized outlet for the architectural and utopian fantasies of an individual such as Chernikhov. Thus the demands of a utopian society’s dictation of style necessitate the existence of an “artist-architect,” a figure who can cross the boundaries of medium and genre based upon both his ambitions and his obligations.

Chernikhov’s last years, up to his death in 1951, take a turn toward the purely abstract and painterly that defies the necessary obligations of a practicing architect. This particular stage in the evolution of his work can suggest the failure on his part to create real buildings for the new Soviet society. Yet in the context of his career, Chernikhov’s so-called architectural romances and abstract paintings seem like logical steps in an evolutionary, artistic process. Perhaps stemming from his work with historical types that enriched his Palaces of Communism, drawings such as the Assyrian town or the medieval Russian palace were Chernikhov’s way of taking a step back from his fantasies. With drawings and paintings such as these (Figs. 44-46), Chernikhov experimented with the same principles of geometric construction and harmony using

the *known* landscape. It is interesting to note that the combination of colors and lines that fit his architectural fantasies so well make these historically-minded romances more alien. Despite his many tangents along the lines of historical architecture and graphics, Chernikhov consistently returns to the Suprematist basis by combining geometric and organic elements in a still hard-edged, graphic manner. For example, two of his abstract paintings are, by their colors and geometric form, in direct conversation with Malevich's work circa 1915 (Figs. 47-48). By alternating colors where both organic and geometric shapes collide, Chernikhov maintains a constructively-based mentality even in his own abstract painting. In this way, his career comes full circle, as if he returned to the very origin from which Malevich launched the new architecture.

### *The Artist-Architect*

"The architect looks with regret upon the unavoidable necessity of fulfilling a purpose and ardently seeks to combine within himself the engineer and the artist . . . This fusion became his primary task."<sup>83</sup>  
 --Kazimir Malevich, 1927

Despite the inherent challenges, art did become architecture in the sense that artists and architects became more aware of the advantages brought about by a dual study of forms. Malevich and others *built* their paintings as opposed to creating images, and the building process is underscored by the architectons, a literal leap from the canvas into our space. Yet why become architecture and not sculpture? With so much attention paid to the new criteria for beauty and clarity by *artist-architects* attuned to the ideology of their times, the boundaries between art as painting, drawing, sculpture, and architecture are in fact less clear. Would

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<sup>83</sup> Kazimir Malevich, "Suprematist Architecture," (1927) in *Form and Function: A Source Book for the History of Architecture and Design 1890-1939*, ed. Tim and Charlotte Benton, with Dennis Sharp (London: Crosby Lockwood Staples, 1975), 109.

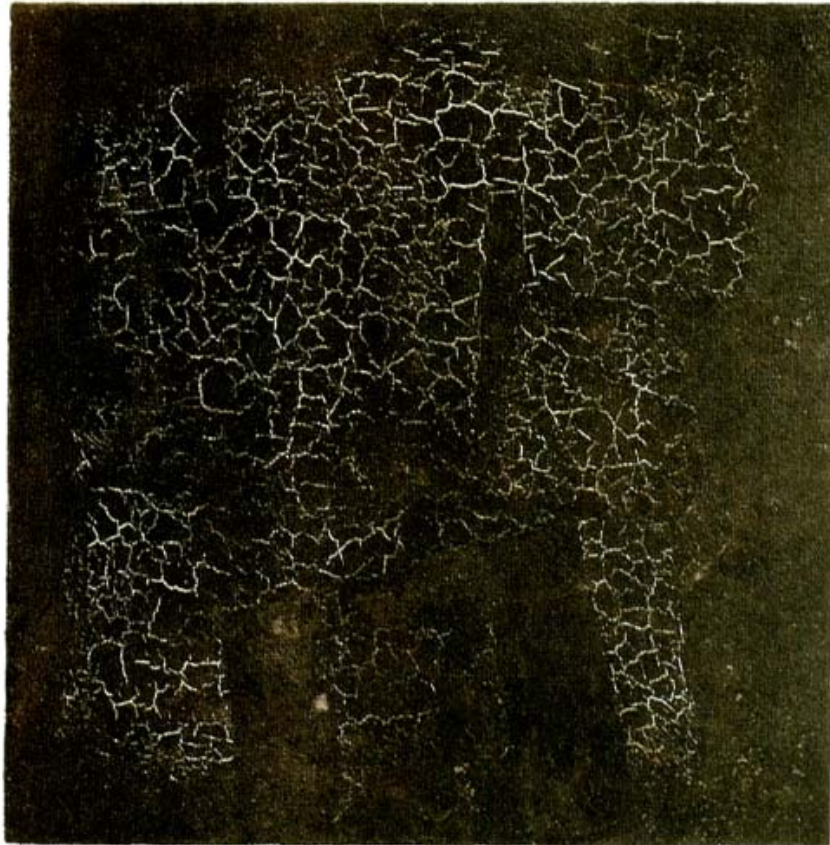


Malevich vehemently protest the categorization of his architectons as sculpture? And are Chernikhov's fantasies any less architectural because they never left the two-dimensional surface? In light of these questions, architecture as a title now encompasses much more than actual buildings. It is the one art form that concerns an entire environment to be experienced and used by the client, whether in reality or in theory.

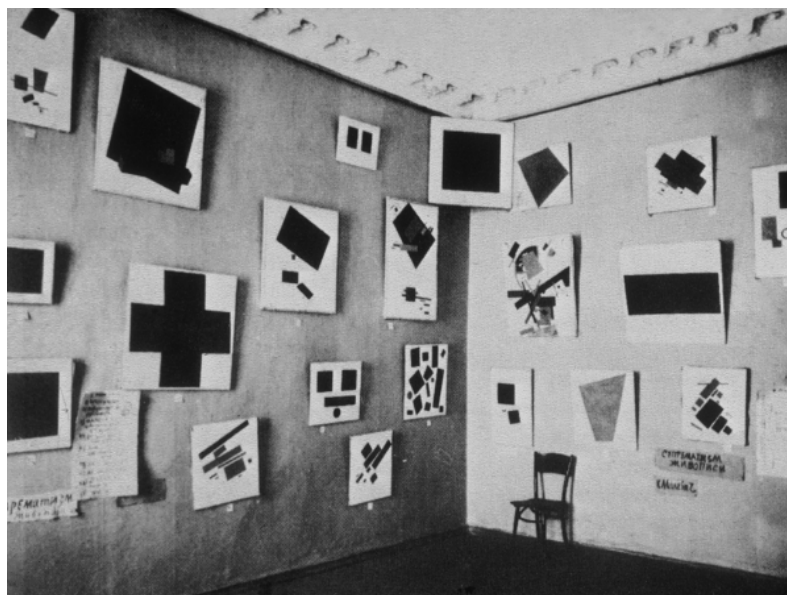
Since Malevich's prediction that Suprematism would lead to a new architecture, the ways in which architecture is conceived by its creator and by its client have changed dramatically. The work of Chernikhov and subsequent architects prompt the viewer to stop and consider architecture beyond appreciating the shelter it provides. We are expected to consider the composition of the different elements, the potential symbolism behind the choices of ornament, and the possibility that part of architecture will always be in the imagination, as it is with Chernikhov's architectural fantasies. In this sense, the new architecture was attempting to achieve a relationship to its viewer equal to the relationship abstract art enjoyed, just as abstract art strove to have architecture's third dimension.

When the period from 1917 to 1932 that was so formative for Russian architecture is considered in the context of a Wölfflinian cycle of style, the rise of Socialist Realism and the apparent demise of the avant-garde is no anomaly. What is remarkable about the career of Chernikhov is that his work maintained the unorthodox nature of avant-garde art within a context of the strictly traditional. His eclecticism allowed a measure of adaptation that recalls the visionary work of Boullée and Piranesi, who also held precarious positions somewhere between the styles and aesthetics of the baroque and the classical in their own times. From a modern point of view, the work of Chernikhov strives to communicate with the viewer not in the old sense—that in some idyllic past society could read architectural form the way we read

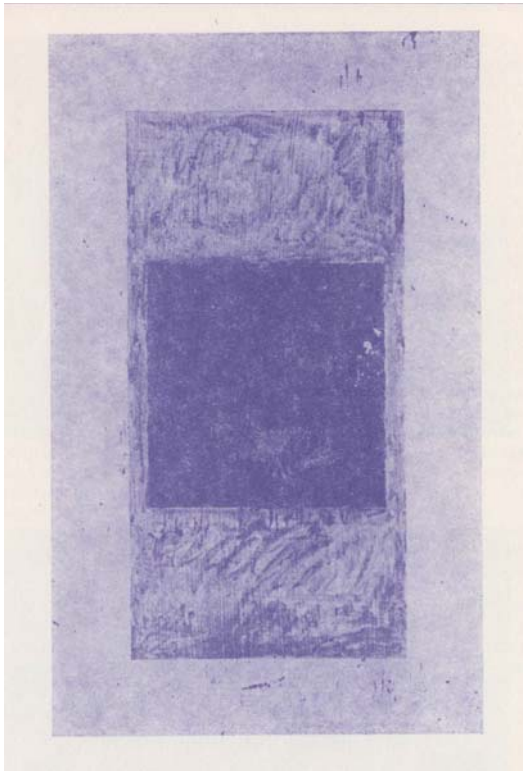
literature—but in the sense that it portrays the multiple purposes of architecture. The many criteria Chernikhov faced as a designer, matters of geometry, engineering, artistic expression, and historical types, are displayed in the physical attributes of his architectural fantasies, texts on graphics, and his eclectic palaces. What differentiates Chernikhov from his colleagues in the Union of Soviet Architects and even from Malevich and the avant-garde is his will to see it through to the end. As the work of the avant-garde approached a pure conflation of architecture and painting in projects such as the architectons, Chernikhov work steadily evolved in the opposite direction, to the purely visionary. The moment his path toward the two-dimensional crosses the Suprematist path toward real space—though only one episode in the history of avant-garde art—stands to define the era dubbed the Cultural Revolution.



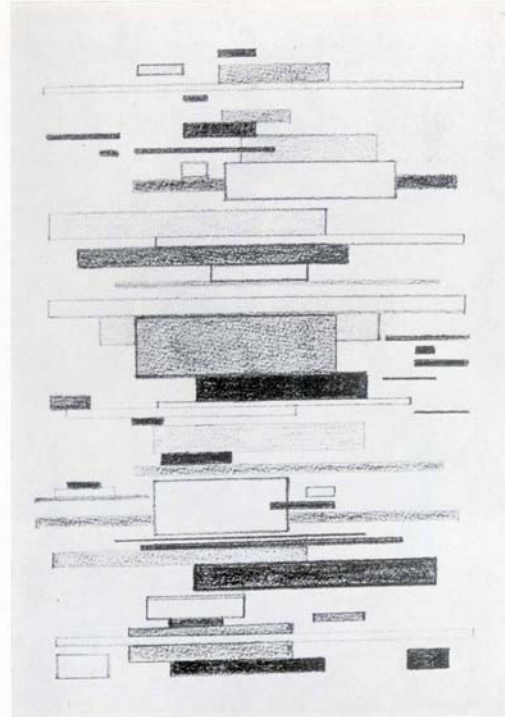
1. Malevich, *Black Square*, 1915, oil on canvas; from Briony Fer, *On Abstract Art* (1997).



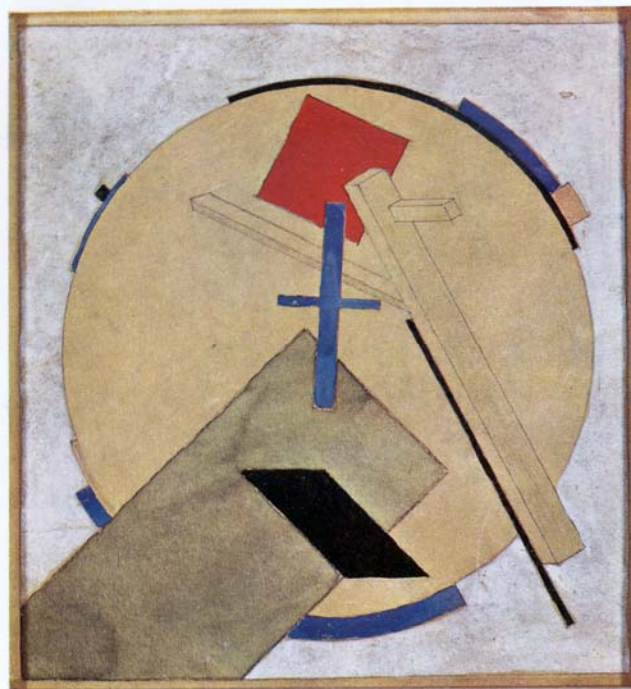
2. "0.10: The Last Futurist Exhibition," Petrograd, 1915; from Zhadova, *Malevich: Suprematism and Revolution in Russian Art 1910-1930*.



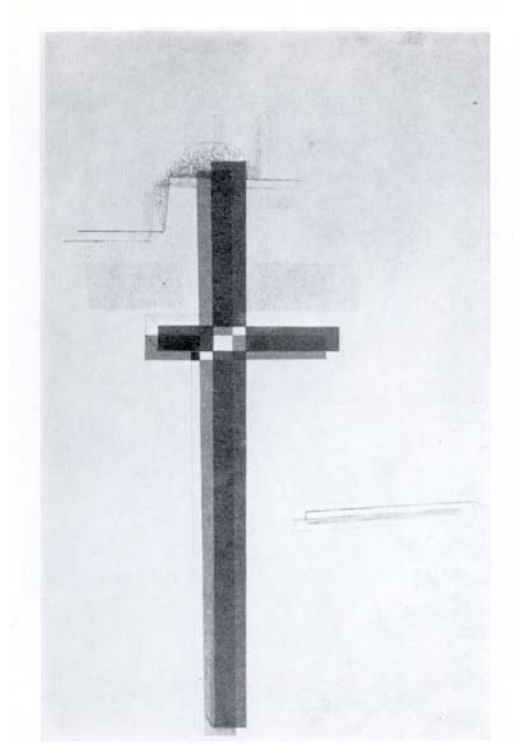
3. Suetin, undated painting; from Railing, *The Suprematist Straight Line*.



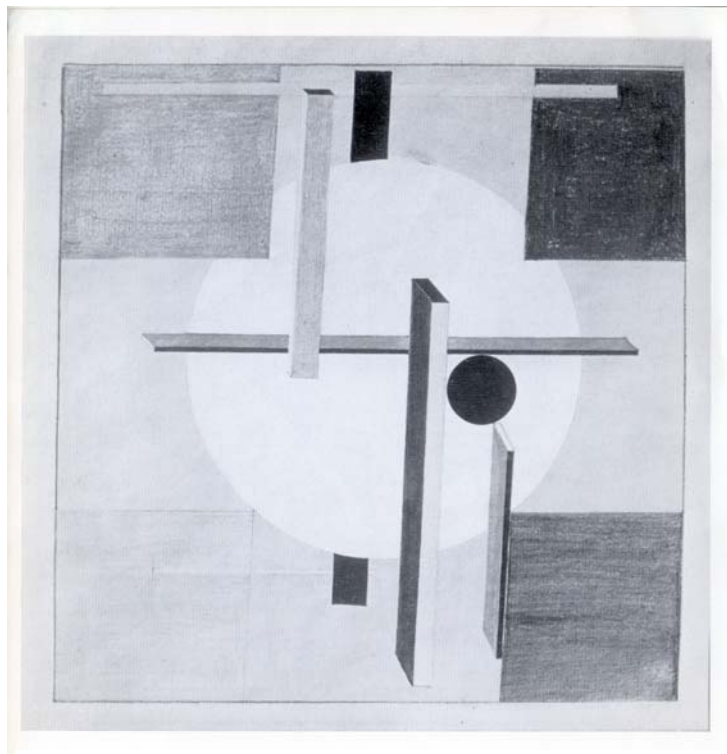
4. Suetin, composition in pencil and chalk, 1923-24; from *The Suprematist Straight Line*.



5. El Lissitzky, Proun 1919-1920, gouache on paper; from *The Suprematist Straight Line*.

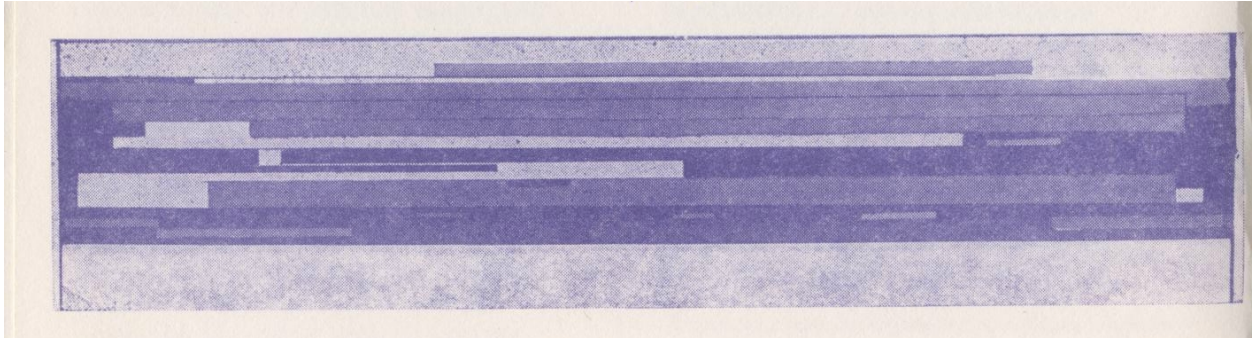


6. El Lissitzky, Proun Study, lithograph, pencil and crayon on paper, 1920; from *The Suprematist Straight Line*.

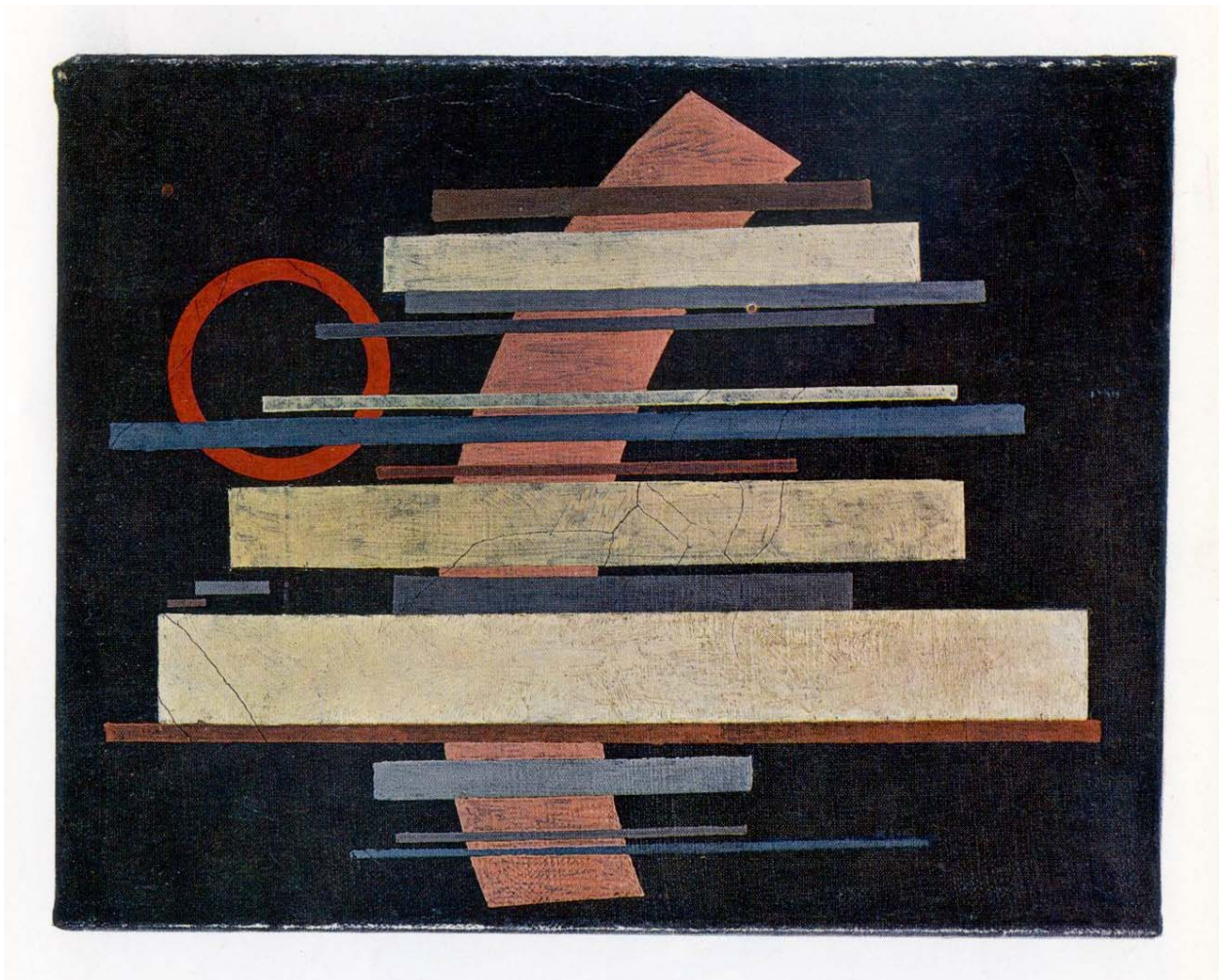


7. El Lissitzky, Study for Proun RVN2, pencil, crayon and gouache on paper, 1923; from *The Suprematist Straight Line*.

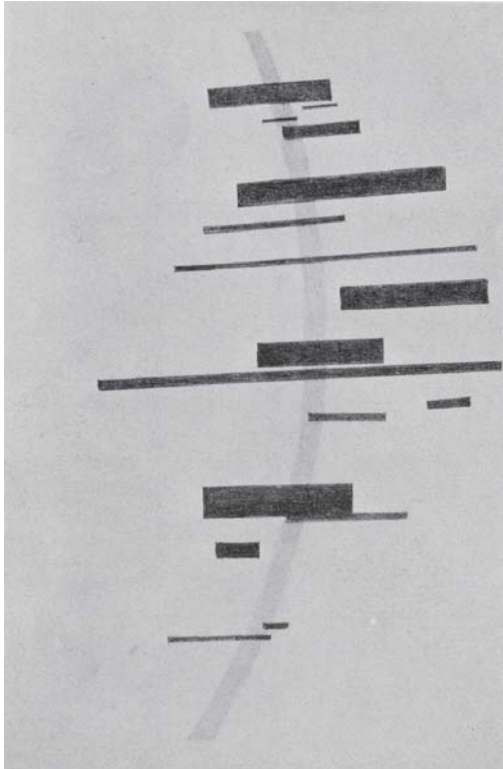




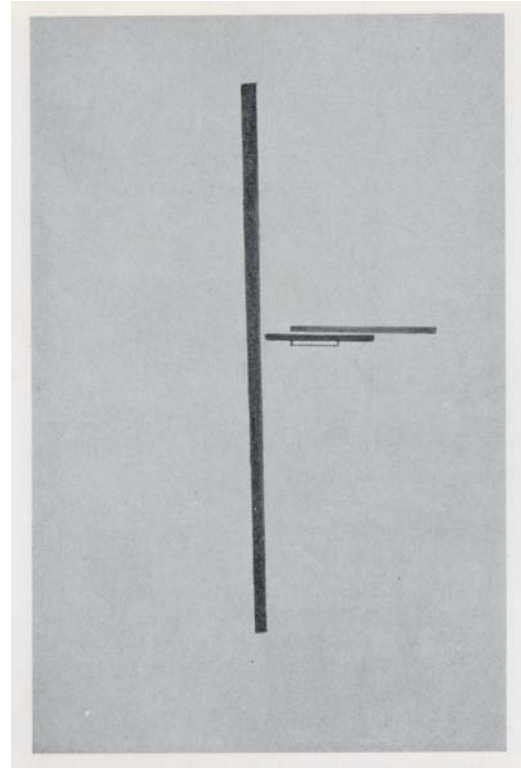
8. Chashnik, watercolor, 1924; from *The Suprematist Straight Line*.



9. Chashnik, composition in oil on canvas, 1923-24; from *The Suprematist Straight Line*.



10. Malevich, "Suprematist composition conveying the feeling of movement and resistance, 1916"; from Malevich, *The Non-Objective World*.

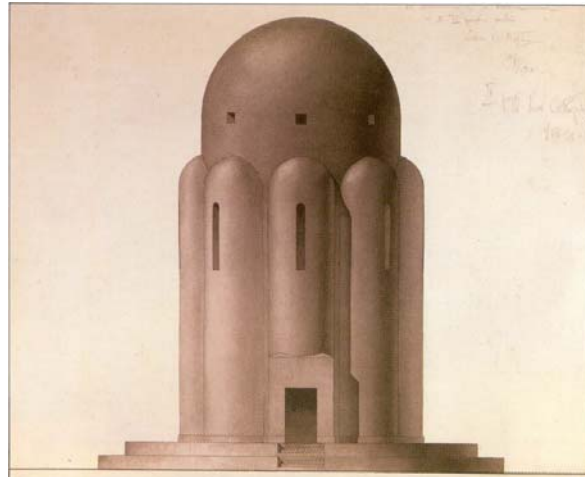


11. Malevich, "Suprematist composition expressing magnetic attraction, 1914"; from Malevich, *The Non-Objective World*.



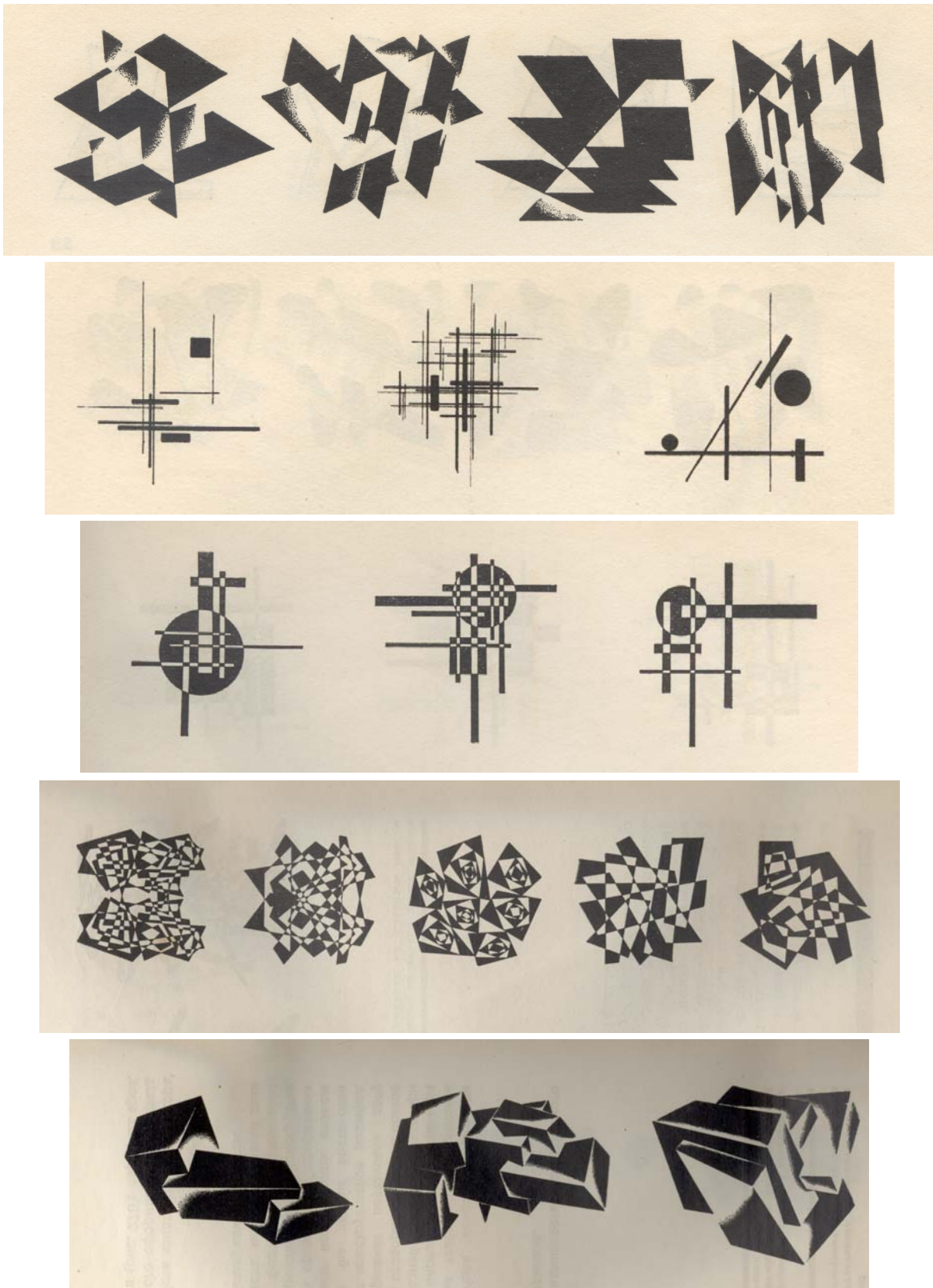
12. Chernikhov, Ukrainian landscape painting, ca. 1914; from Cooke, *Russian Constructivism and Iakov Chernikhov*.



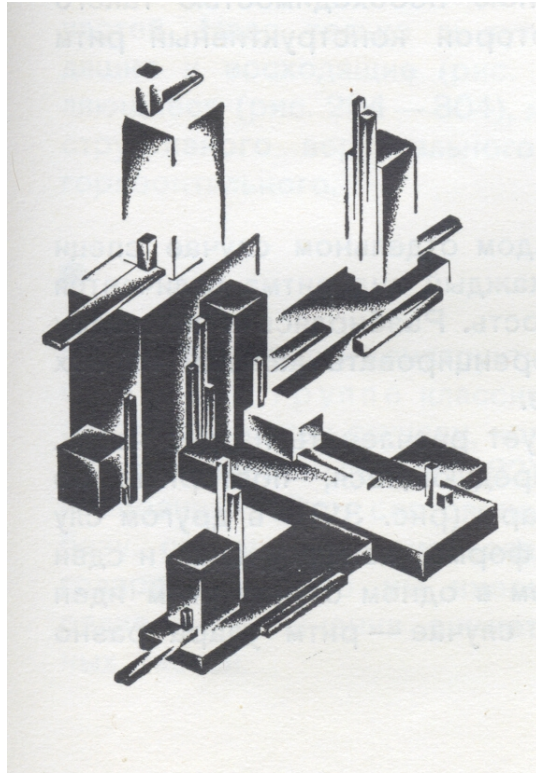


13-15. Examples of student work from the academy at Petrograd; from Cooke, *Russian Constructivism and Iakov Chernikhov*.

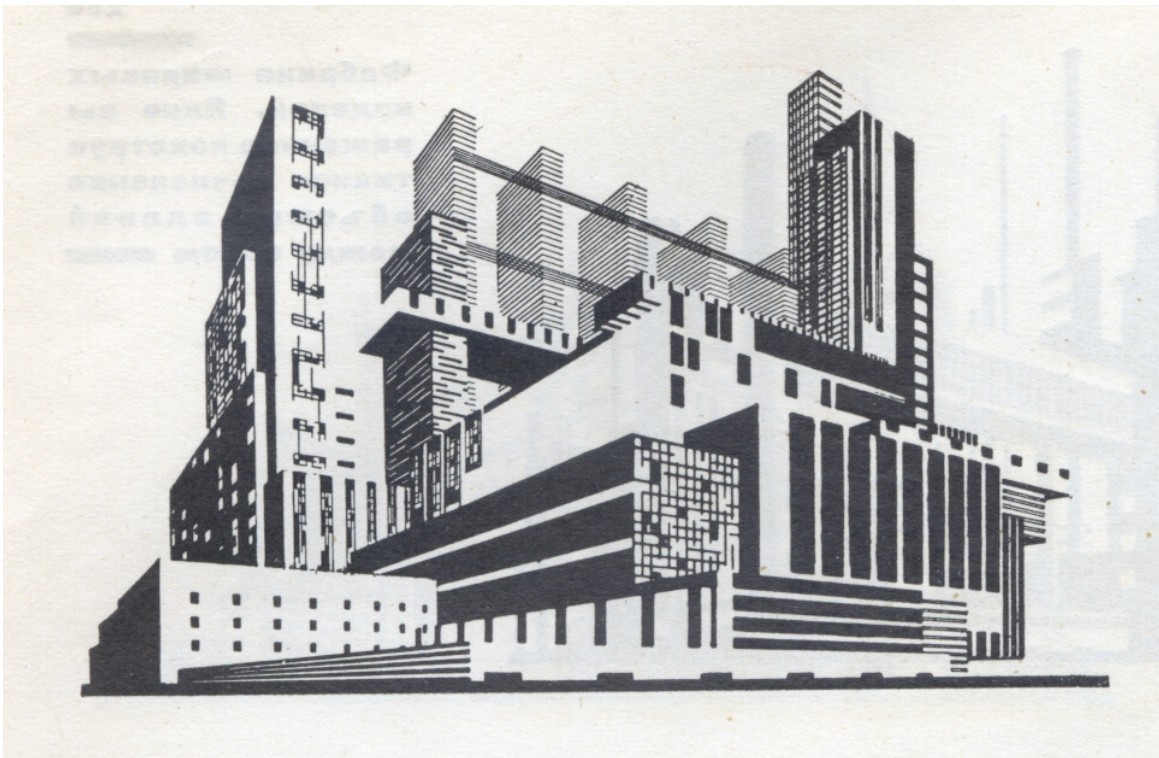




16. Chernikhov, examples of Suprematistic exercises in constructing complex forms out of basic elements of lines and planes; from *The Construction of Architectural and Machine Forms* (1931).

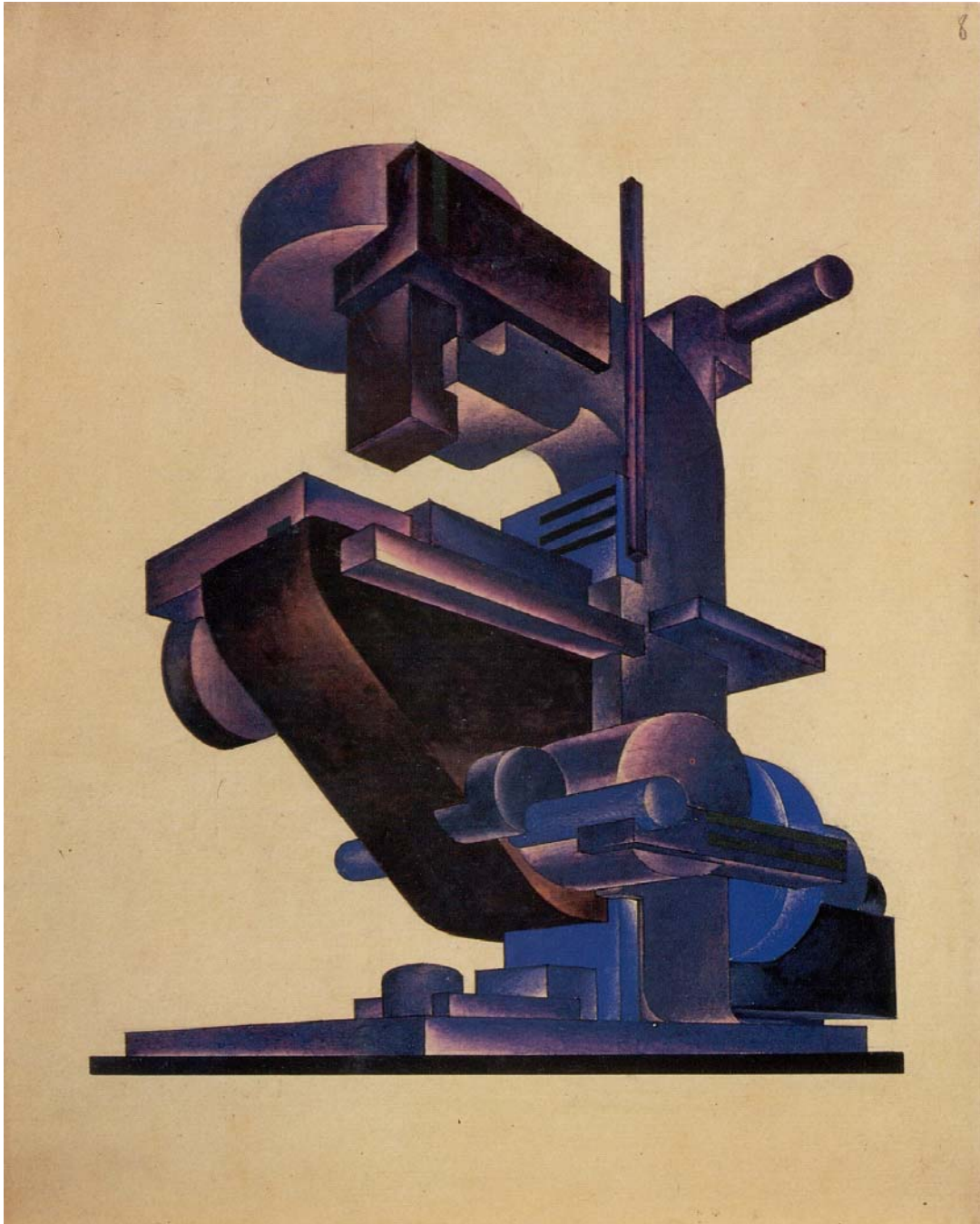


17. Chernikhov, a harmonized combination of geometric forms for an industrial complex; from *The Construction of Architectural and Machine Forms* (1931).

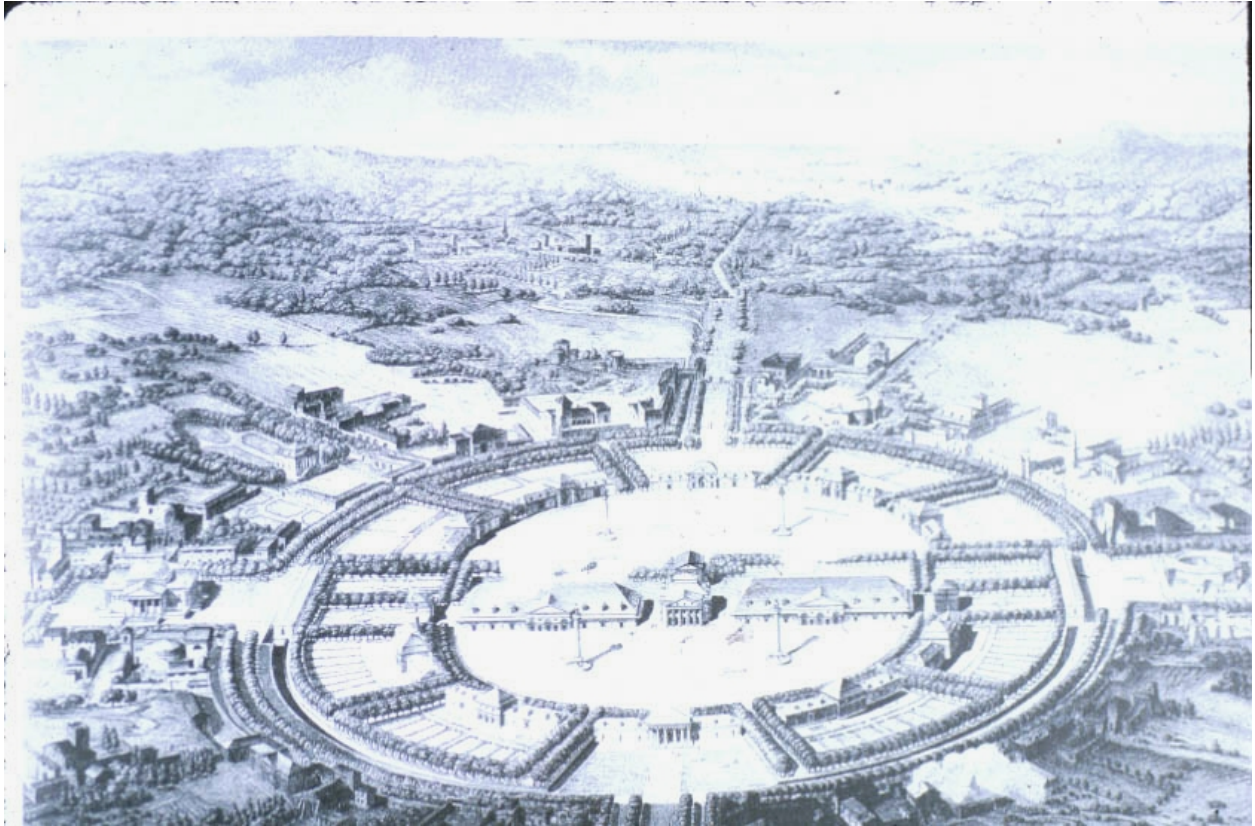


18. Chernikhov, an example of the articulation of a building's hidden Constructivist character; from *The Construction of Architectural and Machine Forms* (1931).





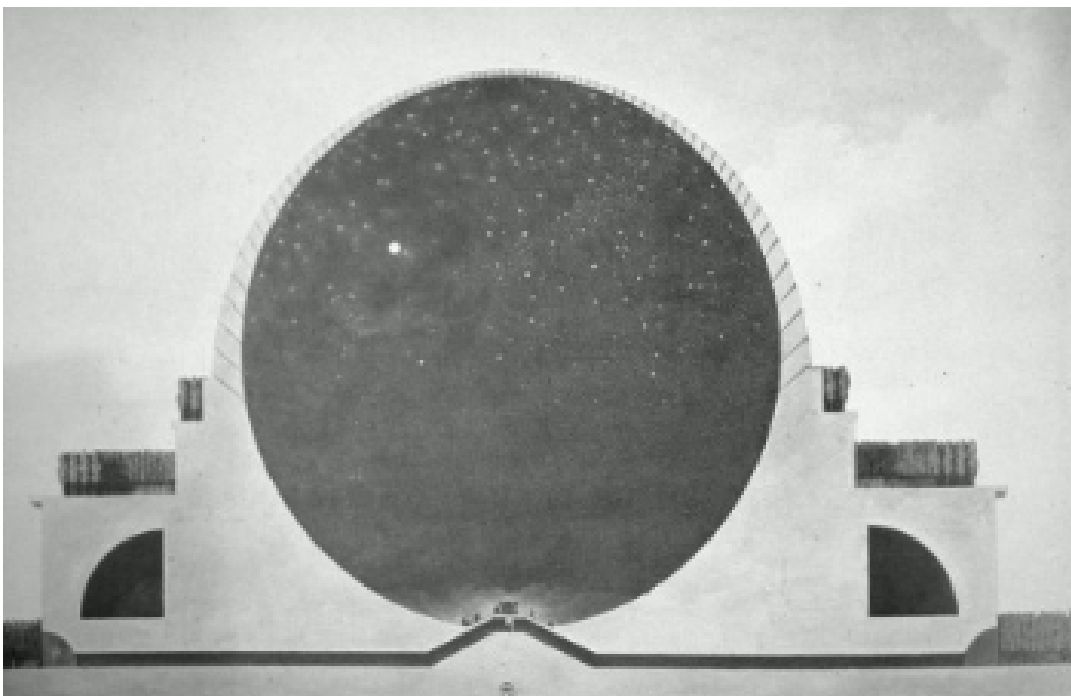
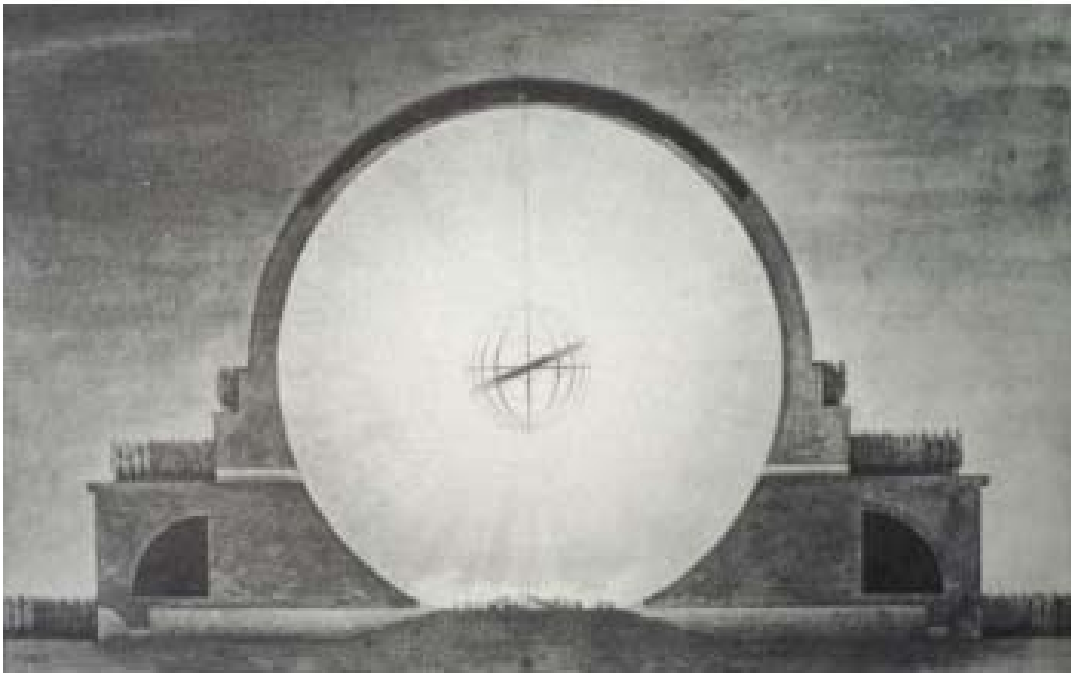
19. Chernikhov, an exercise based on a milling machine from the series "Machine Architectures"; from Cooke, *Russian Constructivism and Iakov Chernikhov*.



20. Ledoux, City of Chaux, perspective, 1775-79; from Jacqueline Gargus, *Ideas of Order* (1994).

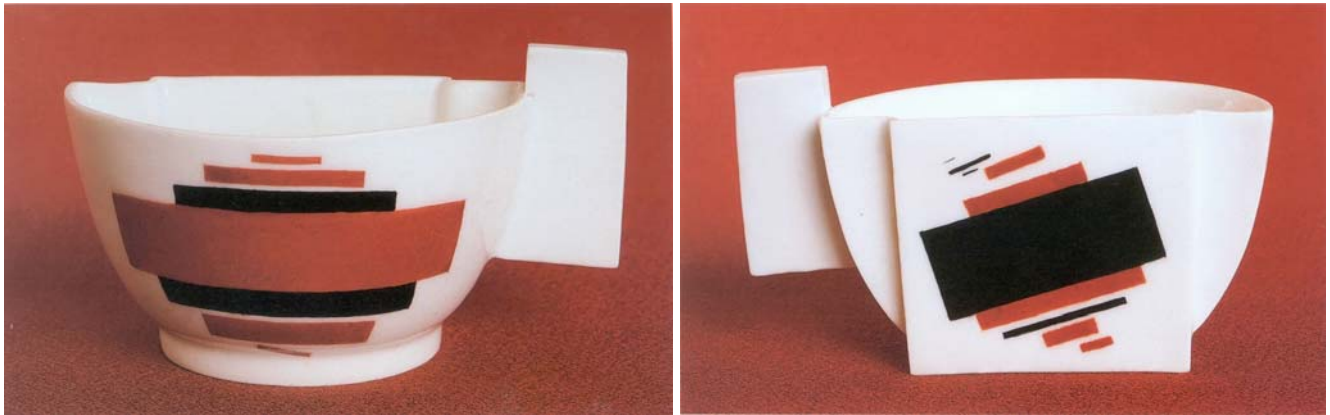


21. Lequeu, Project for a Cow Stable, ink and wash, ca. 1800; from Gargus, *Ideas of Order* (1994).

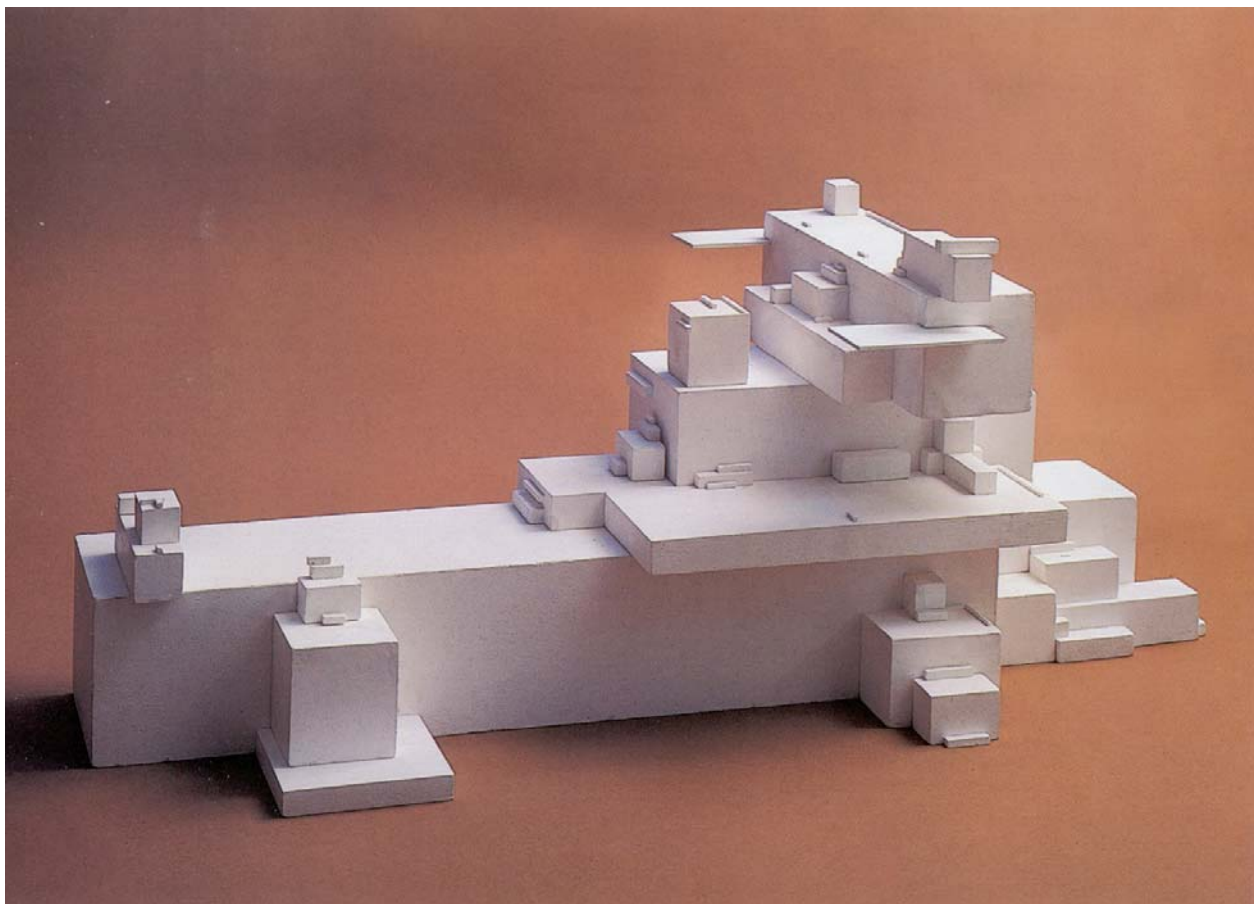


22-23. Boullée, Cenotaph to Newton, cross sections by night (upper) and by day (lower), 1784; from Gargus, *Ideas of Order* (1994).





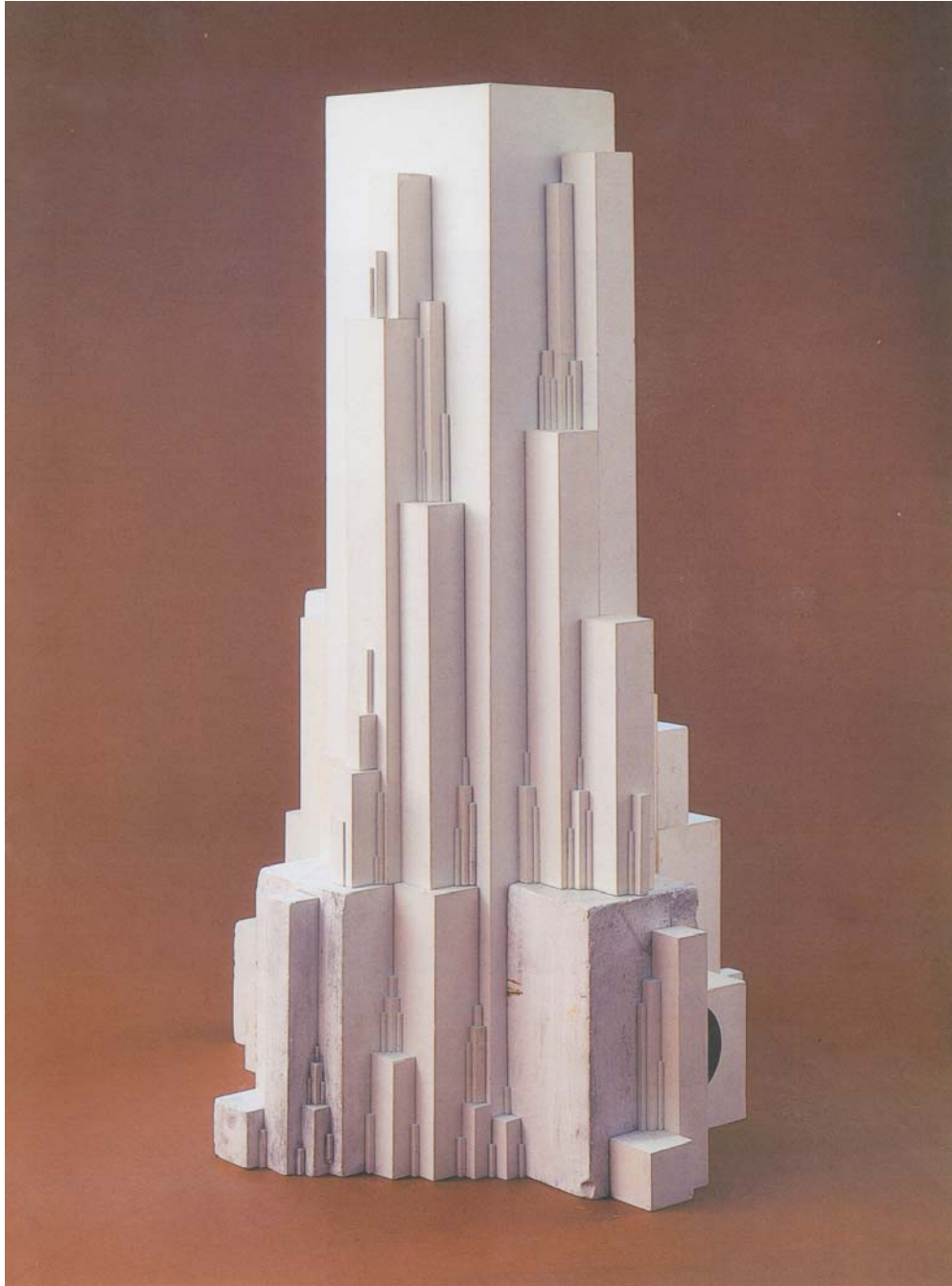
24. Suprematist cup, porcelain; from Petrova, *Kazimir Malevich in the Russian Museum*.



25. Malevich, *Alpha Architecton*, 1920; from Petrova, *Kazimir Malevich in the Russian Museum*.

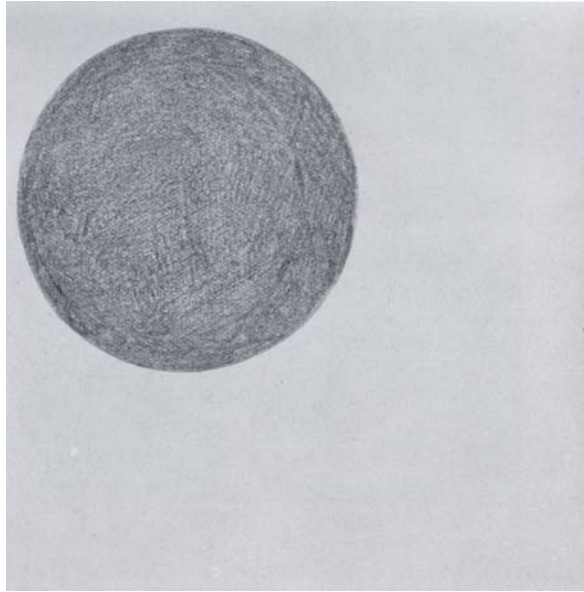


26. Malevich, *Gota Architecton*, 1923; from Petrova, *Kazimir Malevich in the Russian Museum*.



27. Malevich, *Gota Architecton*, 1923; from Petrova, *Kazimir Malevich in the Russian Museum*.



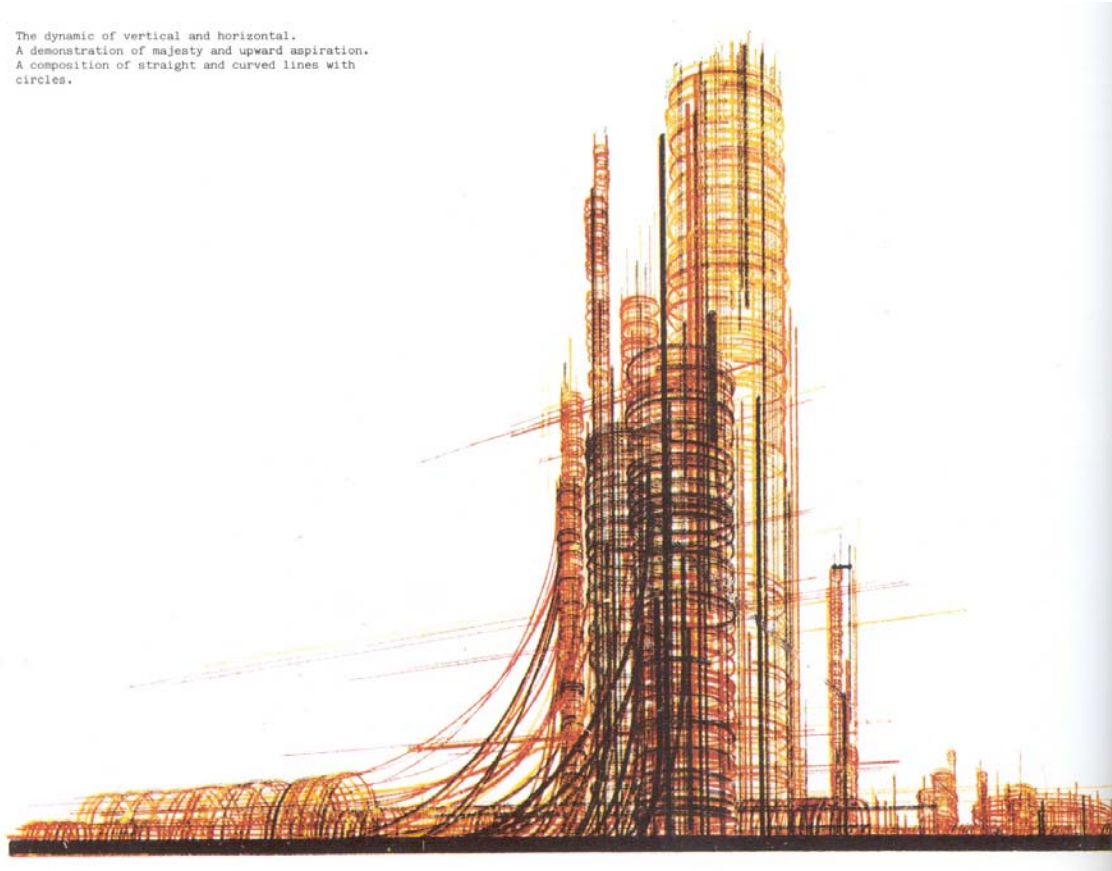


28. Malevich, "The first Suprematist form to develop out of the square, 1913"; from Malevich, *The Non-Objective World*.



29. Chernikhov, Monument to Christopher Columbus, a planar architectural fantasy, 1930; from Cooke, *Russian Constructivism and Iakov Chernikhov*.

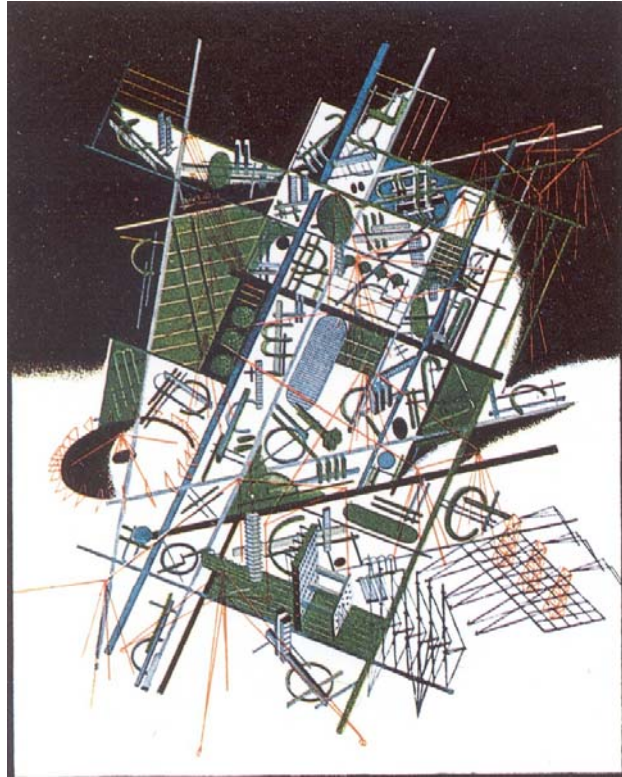
The dynamic of vertical and horizontal.  
A demonstration of majesty and upward aspiration.  
A composition of straight and curved lines with  
circles.



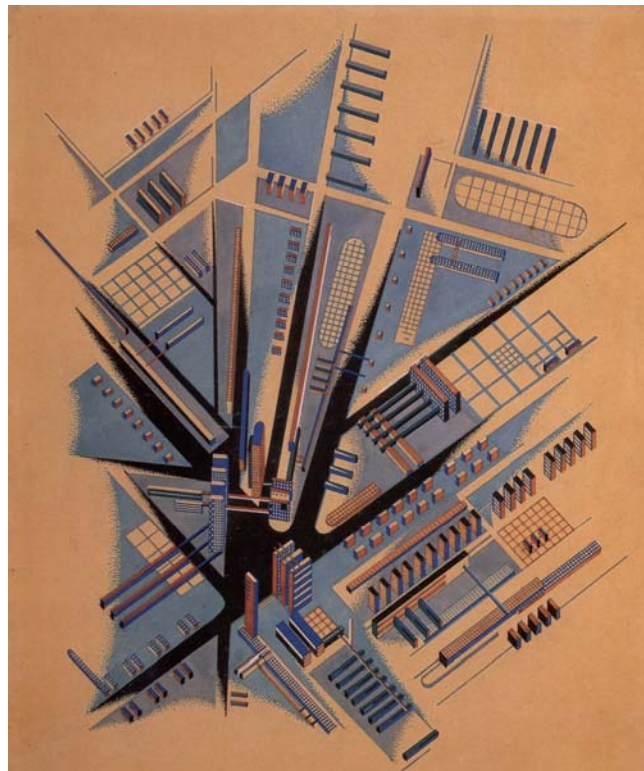
30. Chernikhov, architectural fantasy demonstrating the dynamics of verticals and circles; from Cooke, Chernikhov: *Fantasy and Construction*.



31. Chernikhov, complex solution of curves, an example of “Aristographia,” or “the art of creating a beautiful image”; from Cooke, *Russian Constructivism and Iakov Chernikhov*.

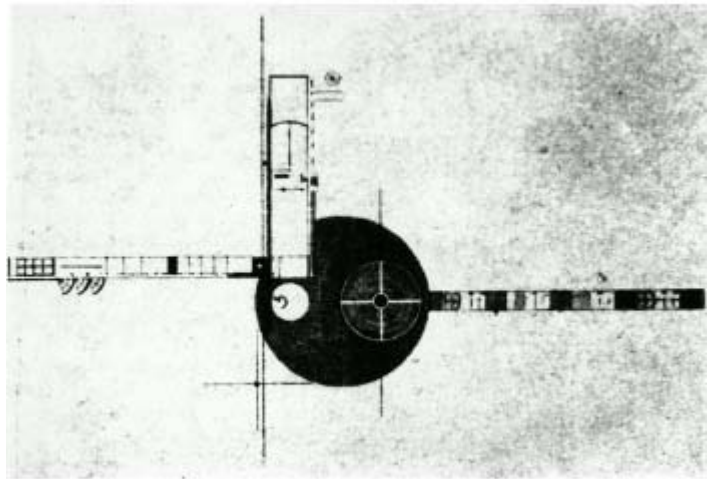
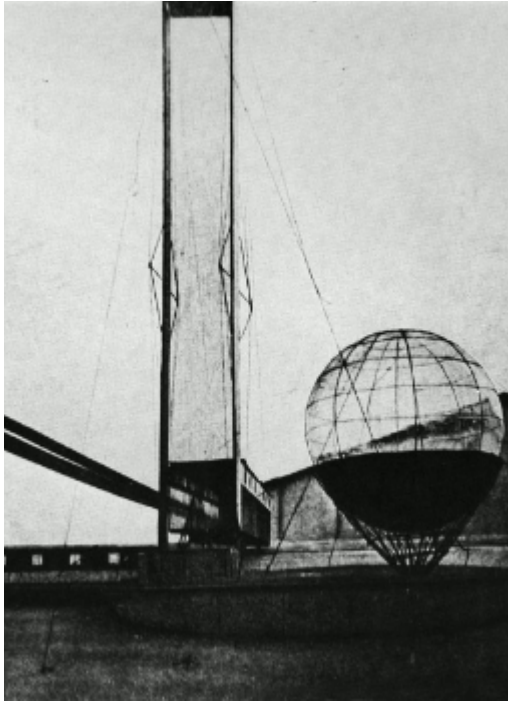


32. Chernikhov, Fantasy No. 87, musical invention of rhythm in structure and color; from Cooke, *Russian Constructivism and Iakov Chernikhov*.

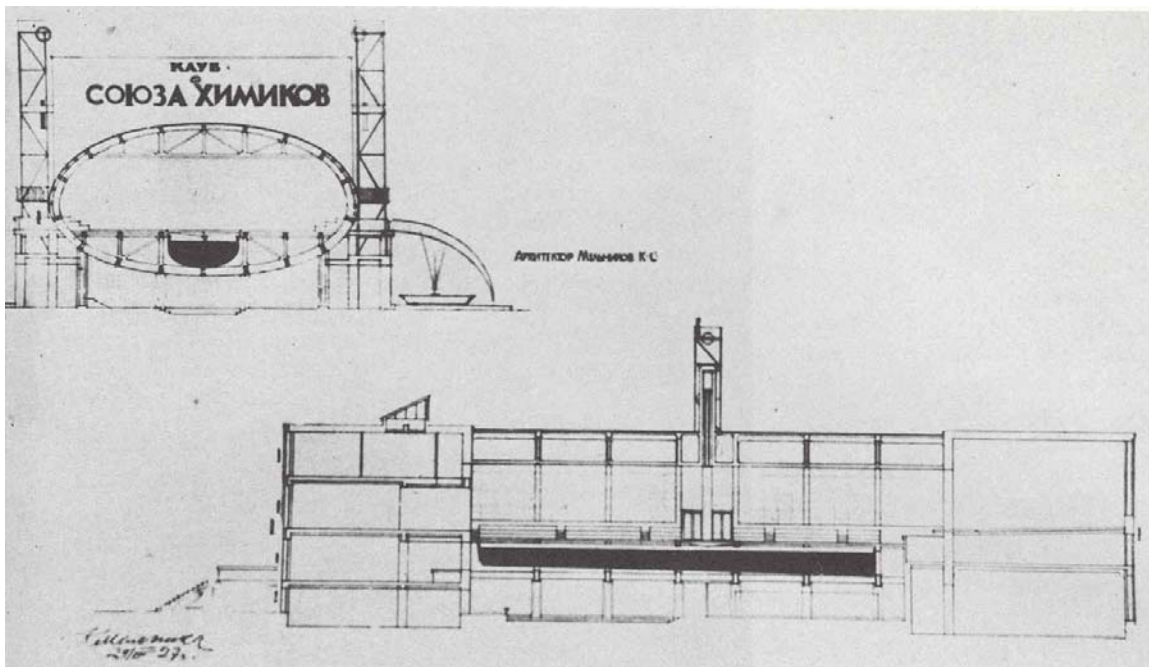


33. Chernikhov, Fantasy No. 58, exaggerated view of a new industrial town; from Cooke, *Russian Constructivism and Iakov Chernikhov*.

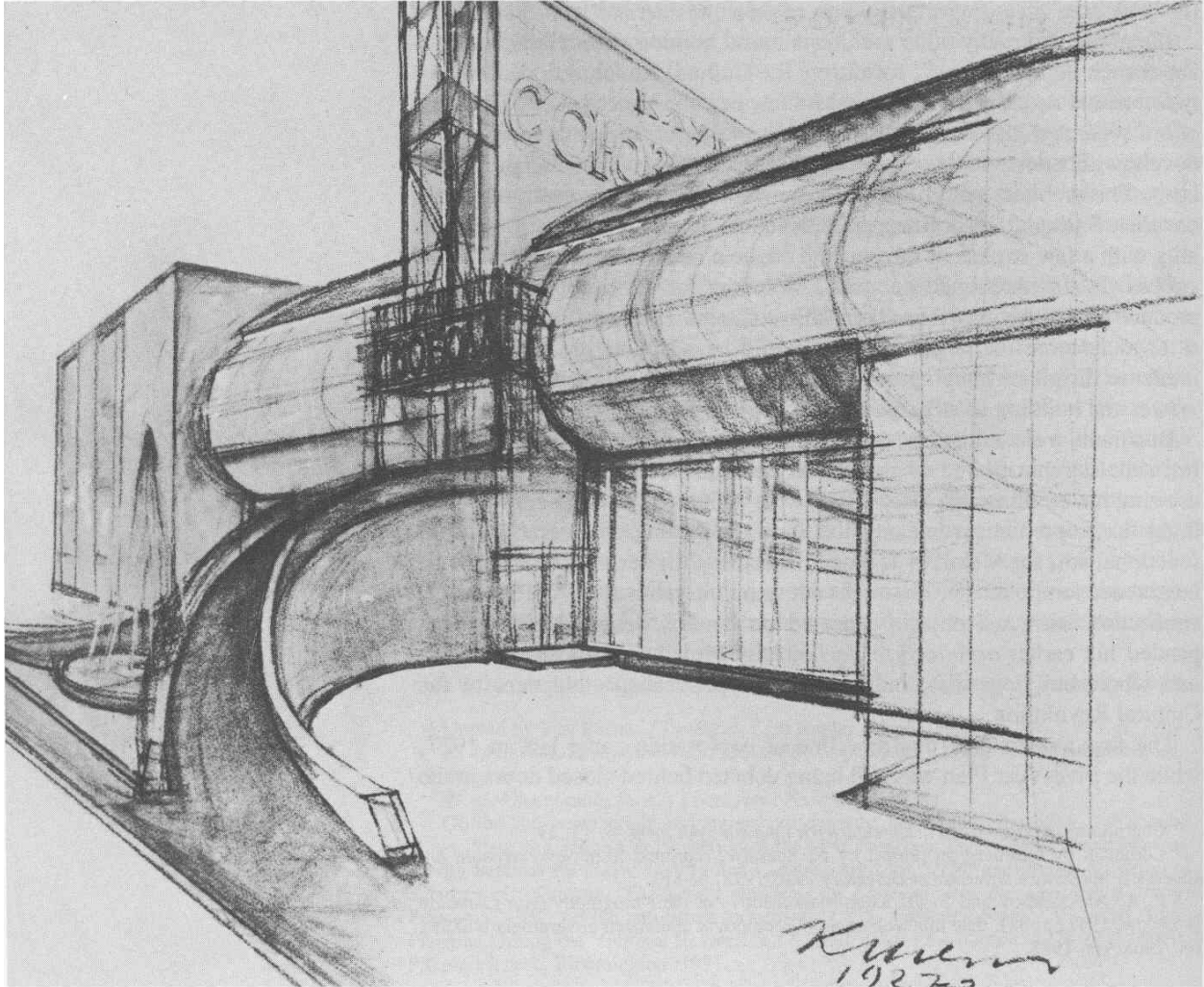




34-35. Leonidov, diploma project for the Lenin Institute, Moscow, 1927; from Gozak, Andrei and Andrei Leonidov *Ivan Leonidov: The Complete Works*.



36. Melnikov, cross sections of Svoboda Factory Club, Moscow, 1927; from Starr, *Melnikov: Solo Architect in a Mass Society*.

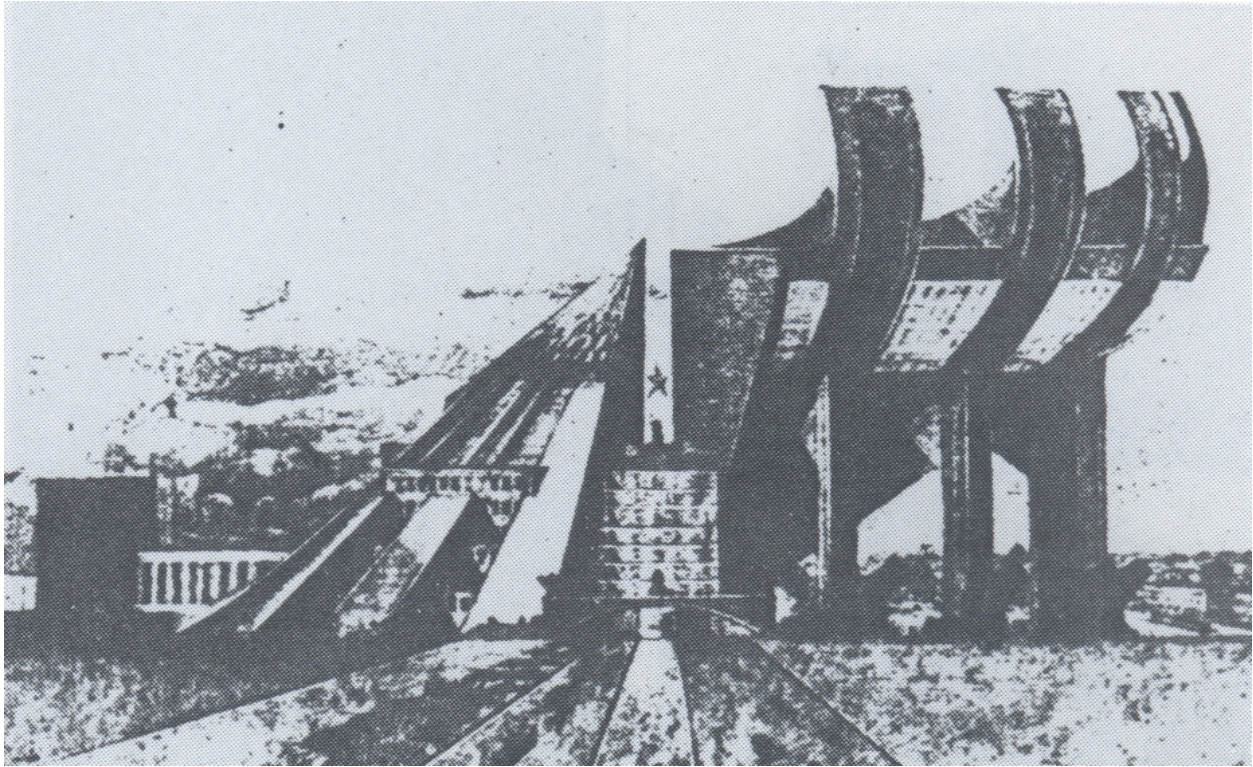


37. Melnikov, preliminary drawing for Svoboda Factory Club, Moscow; from Starr, *Melnikov: Solo Architect in a Mass Society*.

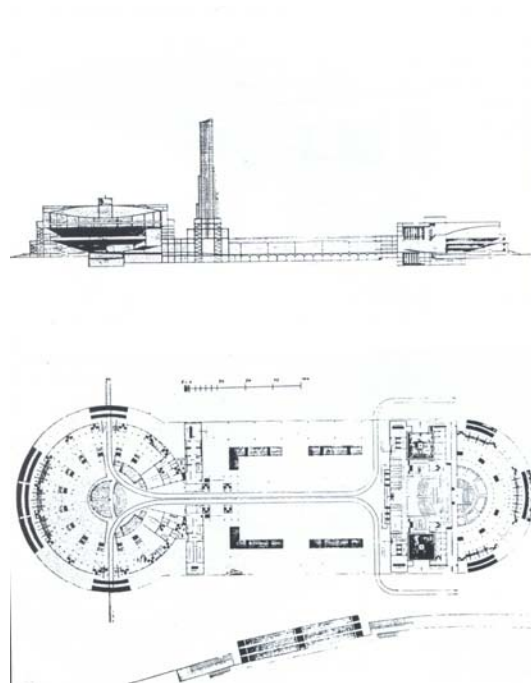


38. Melnikov, Svoboda Factory Club upon completion; from Starr, *Melnikov: Solo Architect in a Mass Society*.



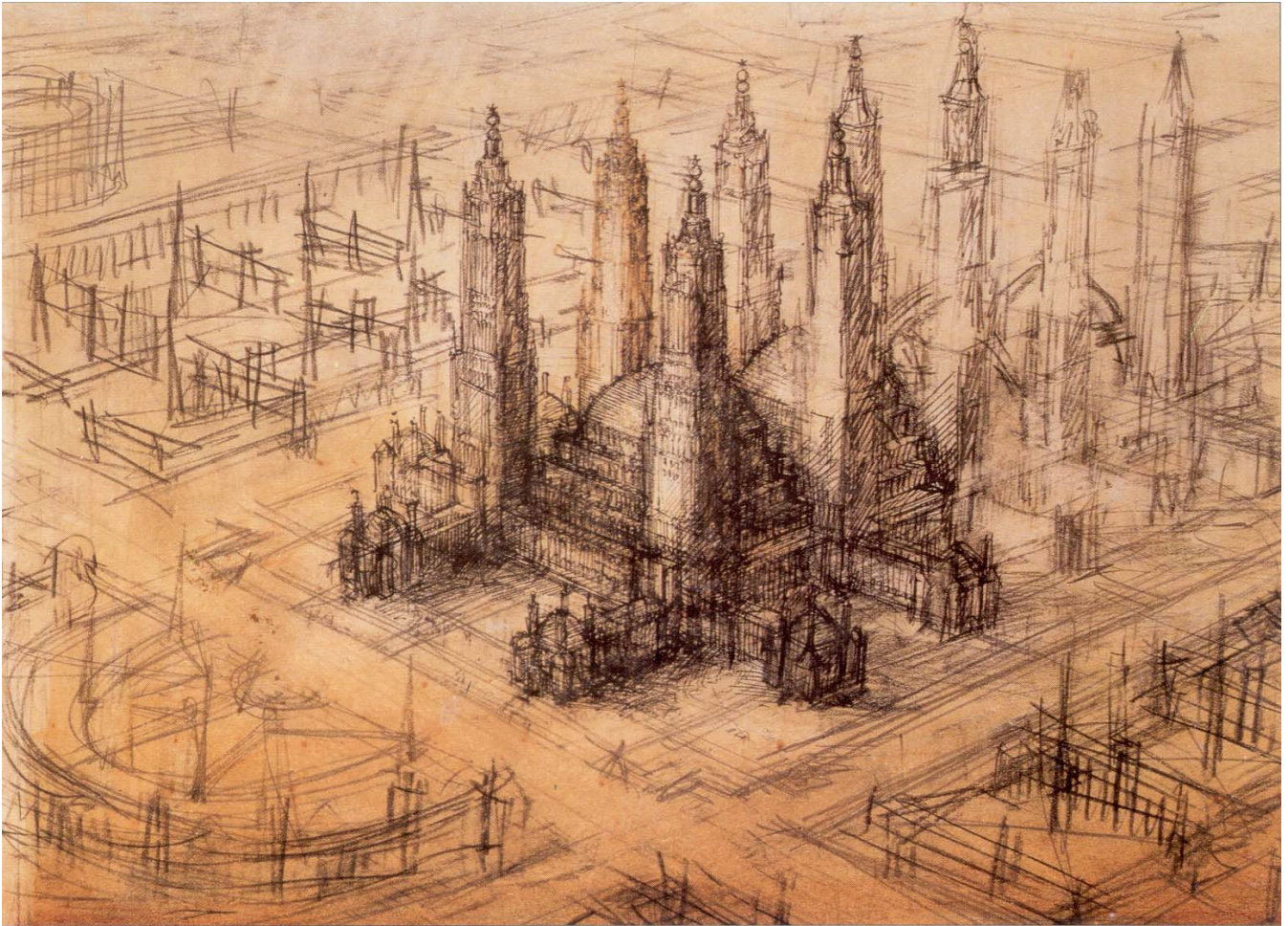


39. Melnikov, entry for the Palace of Soviets Design Competition, 1931; from Lizon, *The Palace of Soviets: The Paradigm of Architecture in the U.S.S.R.*



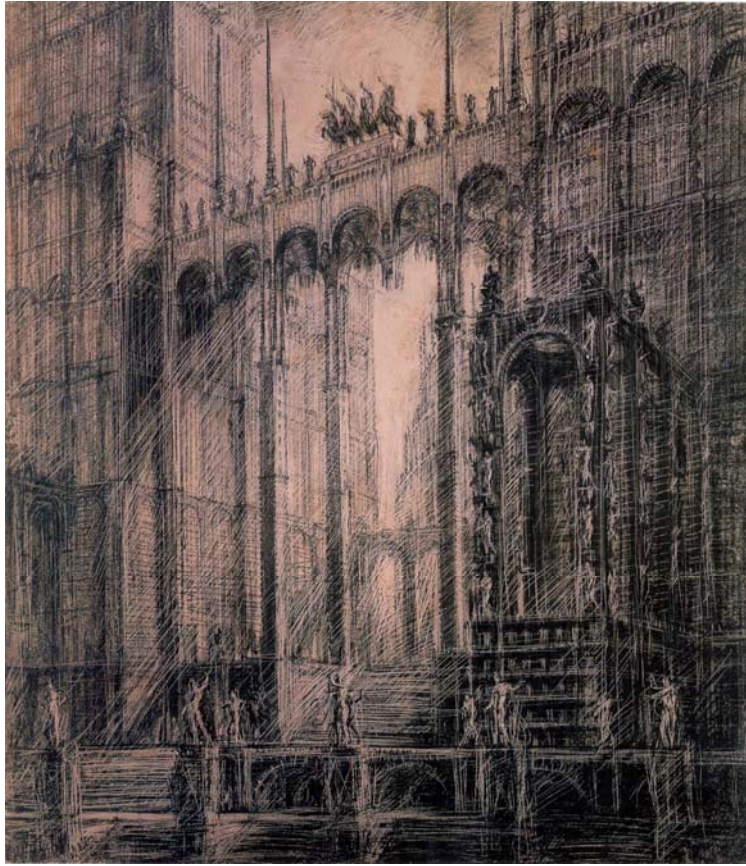
40-41. Iofan, Palace of Soviets grand prize, 1931; from Lizon, *The Palace of Soviets: The Paradigm of Architecture in the U S S R*





42. Chernikovo, a Palace of Communism; from Cooke, *Russian Constructivism and Iakov Chernikovo*.





43. Chernikhov, a Palace of Communism; from Cooke, *Russian Constructivism and Yakov Chernikhov*.



44. Chernikhov, “architectural romances” of an Assyrian town and a medieval Russian palace; from Cooke, *Russian Constructivism and Yakov Chernikhov*.





45. Chernikhov, more “romances,” gothic town and primitive settlement; from Cook, *Russian Constructivism and Iakov Chernikhov*.



46. Chernikhov, “architectural romance” of city complex; from Cooke, *Russian Constructivism and Iakov Chernikhov*.



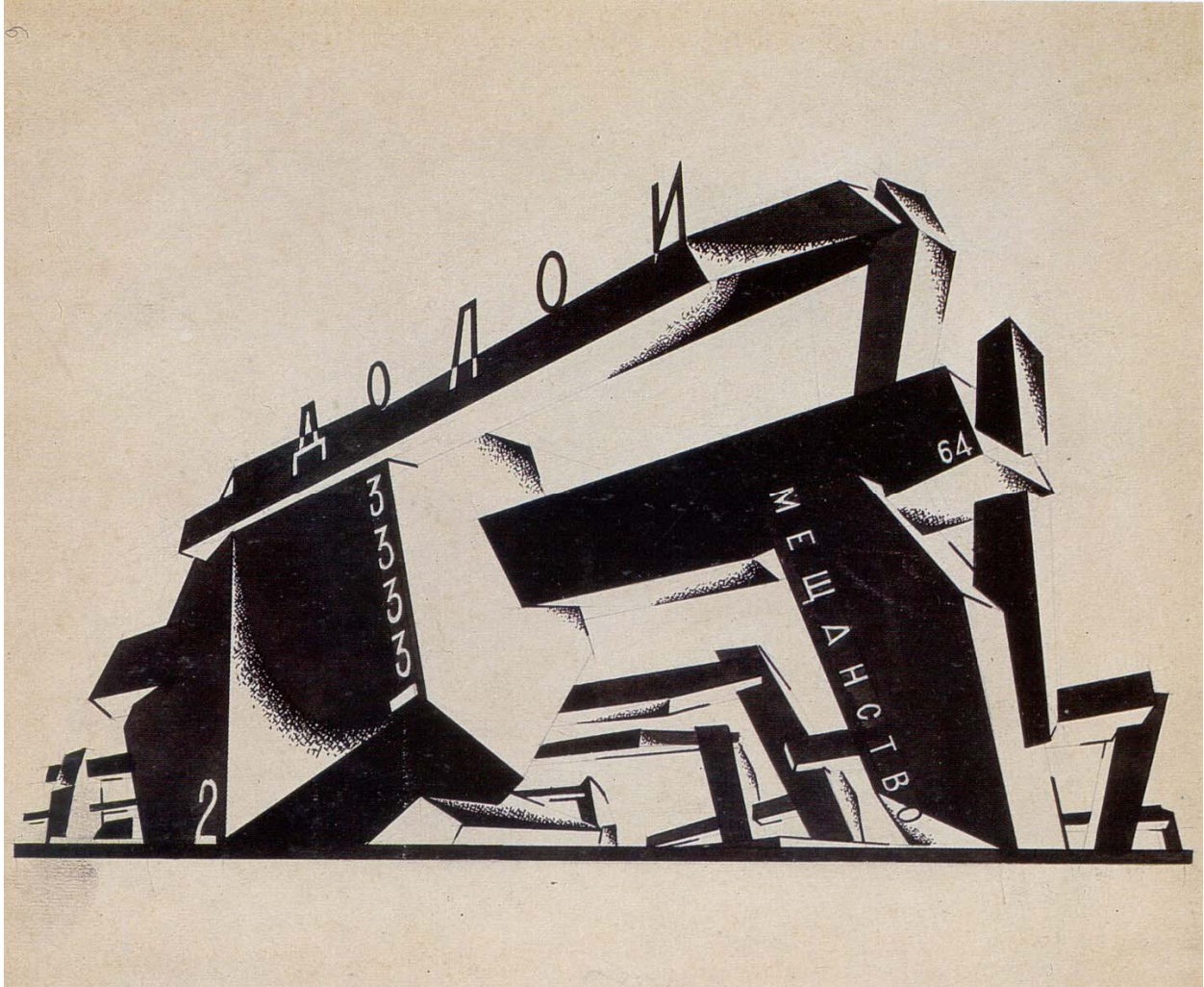


47-48. Chernikhov, abstract paintings; from Cooke, *Russian Constructivism and Iakov Chernikhov*.



49-51. Chernikhov, abstract paintings; from Cooke, *Russian Constructivism and Iakov Chernikhov*.





52. Chernikhov, volumetric exercise with decorative slogan; from *The Construction of Architectural and Machine Forms* (1931).

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